OUTLINE NOTES ON THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS

W. E. VINE, M.A.

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BY

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PREFACE.

The notes contained in this volume were compiled during the course of several years as contributions to "The Harvester" and most of them were published in that monthly magazine. The favourable reception given to them by its readers has encouraged the writer to act upon the suggestion that they should be issued in book form.

Some parts of the Epistle have been treated more fully than others, and these parts of the volume approximate to the nature of a running Commentary, but not to such an extent as to characterise the whole book in that way. A considerable amount of subject-matter consists of the outline headings of the contents of various passages in the Epistle, the object being to provide assistance to those who handle the Word of God, whether in public ministry or in Bible Classes, to set forth their subjects in a somewhat orderly fashion, according to the way in which the Apostle has developed his great themes.

Passages in the Epistle which present more or less difficulty have received somewhat detailed treatment,

and the writer hopes that some little aid may have been afforded towards a right understanding of such. The more we plumb the depths of the Holy Word, the more unfathomable they appear. Yet the sacred Volume never fails to yield its priceless treasures to the prayerful and diligent searcher. May God in His grace and mercy own for His glory the labours which have produced these notes.

W. E. VINE.

Bath.
February, 1929.

INTRODUCTION.

THE Epistle to the Romans broadly falls into two parts. In the first the Apostle sets forth the great truths of the Gospel. The latter half is devoted to a practical application of these doctrines to the lives of believers. The division between the two parts is made at the end of chapter 11.

In the first half Paul vindicates the righteousness of God in all His ways, in His retributive judgments upon sin, in the remedy He has provided in and through Christ for the sinner, and in all His providential dealings with and dispensational appointments for His people the Jews, and for Gentile nations. The latter half makes known the will of God for the believer in his individual life, in his relationship with other believers, and in his attitude toward the world. The whole Epistle is the justification of the ways of God with men.

The various parts may also be marked out in the following way:—

I.—*The Introduction* (1. 1-17). After his greetings to his readers, in which he makes reference to the great subject of his Epistle, he mentions his desire to visit Rome that he may be the means of spiritual blessing to the saints there and preach the Gospel.

His reason for this is the character and power of the Gospel itself.

II.—*The universal guilt of mankind* (1. 18—3.20). The necessity for the gift of righteousness lies in the fact that man has become utterly unrighteous. Wilful ignorance of God produced vain reasoning and the darkening of the heart (verses 19-21). This in turn led to idolatry and immorality, under Divine retribution (22-32). In order to show that man could not attain to righteousness by his own effort, God, having formed the Jewish nation for Himself, put them to the test in this respect, providing them the most favourable circumstances possible. Chapter 2 bears testimony to their failure. Chapter 3 confirms the fact that both Jew and Gentile are under sin and that all the world is brought under the judgment of God (verses 9-20). Hence the necessity that man should become righteous in another way than by his own efforts to recover himself. The only alternative was that righteousness should be granted as a free gift on the sole condition of faith in Jesus Christ.

III.—*Justification and its effects* (3. 21—5, end). This sets forth the basis on which God justifies a sinner. Justification comes through the death of Christ and through faith (3. 21-26), and this excludes all boasting (3. 27-30). At the same time the Law is established. The Old Testa-

ment foretold that righteousness would be reckoned on the ground of faith (4. 1-25). Faith both is essential and introduces the believer into the realisation of peace with God, and joy in the hope of glory (5. 1-11). The curse upon Adam is thus reversed in the case of believers (5. 12-19). The Law was given to prepare for this (5. 20-21).

IV.—*The new life in Christ* (chapters 6—8). This section shows how the believer has died to sin in the death of Christ (6. 1-10), and therefore is no more to serve sin (6. 11-23). Through Christ the believer has died to the Law as a means of life (7. 1-6). Yet the Law itself is essentially good but makes known the evil of sin and its power (7. 7-25). Complete liberation will come only through Christ. In the 8th chapter this new life is set forth by way of contrast between the Spirit and the flesh (8. 1-11). The presence and power of the Spirit in the believer is a pledge of coming glory (8. 12-17). This assurance of glory is confirmed by the present circumstances of nature, and also of believers, who are in all things more than conquerors (8. 18-29).

V.—*The righteousness of God's dealings with Jews and Gentiles* (chapters 9—11). After expressing his sorrow for the state of the Jews (9. 1-5), the Apostle shows that God is neither unfaithful nor unrighteous (9. 6-18). He has reason to find fault

(9. 19-23). The present state both of Jews and of Gentiles is in agreement with Old Testament prophecy (9. 14-29). The Jews have failed to obtain righteousness through their unbelief (9. 30-33). Their unbelief is due to their wilful ignorance; for both the preaching of the Gospel and Israel's rejection of it were foretold (10. 1-21). Yet God has not cast off Israel (11. 1-10). The fall of God's chosen people has been the means of bringing salvation to Gentiles, and Israel as a nation is yet to be saved (11. 11-32). The contemplation of all this leads to an outburst of praise (11. 33-36).

VI.—*Practical Christian life* (12. 1—15. 13). In view of the mercies of God, the believer is to present himself to God and not to be conformed to the world (12. 1-3); he has responsibility to discharge towards both his fellow-believers (12. 4-13), and the world, both the powers that rule and neighbours (12. 14—13. 14). Then with regard to believers, there is to be mutual toleration and care. They are not to judge one another (14. 1-12); they are to avoid injuring one another (14. 13-23); the strong are to help the weak (15. 1-6), and to follow the example of Christ, so that all may glorify God together (15. 7-13).

VII.—*Conclusion* (15. 14—16. 27). Here Paul speaks of his own ministry (15. 14-21) and his future

plans and immediate business (15. 22-29). He sends salutations to various believers in Rome (16. 1-16). He warns the saints against divisions (16. 17-20), sends salutations from the saints at Corinth (16. 21-24), and closes his Epistle with a doxology (16. 25-27).

ANALYSIS OF THE EPISTLE.

INTRODUCTION.

1. 1-17.

Section (1) 1. 1-7—The Greetings.
- (a) The writer—1
- (b) His subject—2-6.
- (c) The persons addressed—7.

Section (2) 1. 8-17—Paul's interest in the saints at Rome.

DIVISION I.

1. 18—3. 20—UNIVERSAL GUILT.

Section (1) 1. 18-32—Human sin and Divine retribution.
- (a) Revelation—19.
- (b) Responsibility—20.
- (c) Refusal—21-23.
- (d) Retribution—24-32.

Section (2) 2. 1-10—The Guilt of the Jew as well as the Gentile.

(a) The Divine Judgment—1-5.

(b) The means of life—6-10.

Section (3) 2. 11-29—The impartiality of God's Judgment.

(a) The giving of the Law is no argument against it—11-24.

(b) The appointment of circumcision is no argument against it—25-29.

Section (4) 3. 1-9—The real position of the Jews.

(a) A question and its answer—1-4.

(b) An objection and its answer—5-18.

(c) The impossibility of justification by the Law—19-20.

DIVISION II.

3. 21—5. 21—Justification and Its Effects.

Section (1) 3. 21-26—Justification through faith.

(a) The righteousness of God and faith in Christ—21-22.

(b) Justification by His grace—23-24.

(c) The manifestation of God's righteousness, through Christ—25-26.

Section (2) 3. 27-31—All boasting excluded.

(a) The unity of God and the character of His work—27-30.

(b) The Law established—31.

Section (3) 4. 1-16—Evidences that righteousness is reckoned on the condition of faith.
- (a) Twofold witness from the Law and the Prophets—1-6.
- (b) Twofold proof from history—7-16.

Section (4) 4. 17-25—Abraham's faith.
- (a) The character of his faith—17-21.
- (b) The effect of his faith—22.
- (c) The purposes of the record—23-25.

Section (5) 1-11—The effects of faith (individual).
- (a) What faith is the ground of—1-5.
- (b) The proof of God's love—6-8.
- (c) Inferences from the proof—9-11.

Section (6) 5. 12-21—The effects of faith (racial).
- (a) The judgment on Adam reversed—12-19.
- (b) The Law given to prepare this—20-21.

DIVISION III.

Chapters 6.—8.—The New Life in Christ.

- (a) The new life in Christ unto God—chapter 6.
- (b) The new life in Christ in relation to the Law—chapter 7.
- (c) The new life in Christ in relation to the Spirit—chapter 8.

A. Chapter 6.

The new life in Christ unto God.

Section (1) 6. 1-11—The inconsistency of continuing in sin.

(a) Because of death to sin—1-3.

(b) Because of resurrection life—4-9.

(c) Because of our attitude Godward—10-11.

Section (2) 6. 12-23—Service unto righteousness.

(a) The character of the service—12-18.

(b) The consequences of the service—19-23.

B. Chapter 7.

The new life in Christ in Relation to the Law.

Section (3) 7. 1-6—Freed from the Law.

(a) Illustration—1-3.

(b) Application—4-6.

Section (4) 7. 7-25—The true character of the Law.

(a) The power of the Law to convict of sin—7-13.

(b) The inability of the Law to deliver from sin—14-25.

C. Chapter 8.

The new life in Christ in relation to the Spirit.

Section (5) 8. 1-11—The Spirit the means of life and the power for righteousness.
(a) The work of the Trinity—1-4.
(b) A contrast in persons, aims, effects, conditions—5-8.
(c) The effects of the indwelling of the Spirit—9-11.

Section (6) 8. 12-27—The Spirit the means of sonship and the proof of coming glory.
(a) The witness of the Spirit—12-17.
(b) Present suffering preliminary to glory—18-27.

Section (7) 8. 28-39—God the Justifier the pledge of glory, and the love of Christ the power for victory.
(a) The purposes of God in Christ—28-30.
(b) The justifying grace and the love of God in Christ—31-39.

DIVISION IV.

CHAPTERS 9—11—THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD IN HIS DEALINGS WITH ISRAEL AND THE GENTILES.

Section (1) chapter 9—The Sovereignty of God.
(a) Paul's sorrow for Israel's condition —9. 1-5.
(b) God's sovereignty in election; His word established—9. 6-13.

(c) God's sovereignty stated in the Old Testament; His righteousness established—9. 14-18.

(d) God's sovereignty unchallengeable; His longsuffering and mercy—9. 19-24.

(e) God's sovereignty in relation to Israel and the Gentiles foretold in the Old Testament—9. 25-29.

(f) A problem explained; faith the key—9. 30-33.

Section (2) chapter 10—The possibilities of faith.

(a) The cause of the rejection of Israel 10. 1-4.

(b) The righteousness of faith—10. 5-10.

(c) Faith possible to Jew and Gentile—10. 11-17.

(d) Israel's unbelief and the faith of Gentiles foretold in the Old Testament—10. 18-21.

Section (3) chapter 11—God's grace and mercy.

(a) Israel not cast off, a remnant saved—11. 1-6.

(b) Israel in temporary hardness—11. 7-10.

(c) Gentiles blessed through Israel's fall: Israel's restoration will mean world-wide blessing—11. 11-15.

(d) The illustration of the olive trees—11. 16-24.

(e) God's mercy present and future—11. 25-36.

DIVISION V.

CHAPTERS 12. 1—15. 13—PRACTICAL CHRISTIAN LIFE.

Section (1) 12. 1-2—Responsibility towards God.

Section (2) 12. 3—Responsibility towards self.

Section (3) 12. 4-8—Responsibility towards the Church.

Section (4) 12. 9-13—Responsibility towards fellow-believers.

Section (5) 12. 14-21—Responsibility towards the world.

Section (6) 13. 1-7—Responsibility towards the State.

Section (7) 13. 8-14—Responsibility towards neighbours.

Section (8) 14. 1—15. 4—Mutual responsibilities of the weak and the strong.

(a) Mutual toleration and the Lordship of Christ—14. 1-12.

(b) Mutual care, and the service of Christ—14. 13-33.

(c) Mutual advantage and the example of Christ—15. 1-4.

Section (9) 15. 5-13—Mutual responsibility of all believers.

CONCLUSION OF THE EPISTLE.

Chapters 15. 14—16. 27.

Section (1) 15. 14-21—The Apostle's ministry.
- (a) Its nature—14-16a.
- (b) Its effects—16b to 19a.
- (c) Its scope—19b to 21.

Section (2) Chapter 15. 22-29. His future plans and immediate business.
- (a) His future plans and expectation—22-24.
- (b) His immediate business—25-27.
- (c) His future plans and assurance—28-29.

Section (3) A request for prayer and benediction—15. 30-33.

Section (4) 16. 1-16—A commendation of Phoebe and salutations to friends in Rome.

Section (5) 16. 17-20—Admonition, Commendation, Assurance, and Benediction.

Section (6) 16. 21-24—Salutations from the Saints at Corinth.

Section (7) 16. 25-27—Doxology.

OUTLINE NOTES ON ROMANS.

INTRODUCTION 1. 1-17.

SECTION 1.

1. 1-7—The Greetings.

(a) *The Writer* (verse 1).

The introduction to the Epistle to the Romans consists of the first seventeen verses, and contains special reference to its great theme, the Gospel, its character, contents and effects. In the first verse Paul describes himself in three ways with reference to the Gospel; he is :—

(1) A servant of Jesus Christ.
(2) Called to be an Apostle.
(3) Separated unto the Gospel of God.

(b) *The Subject* (verses 2-6).

The following is an outline of verses 2-6 :

The Promise of the Gospel.....2.
The Person of the Gospel .....3-4.
The Preaching of the Gospel .....5.
The Product of the Gospel .....6.

The order of this is noticeable. It corresponds to the whole of Scripture. The *Promise* of the Gospel

(v. 2) was given in the Old Testament; the *Person* of the Gospel (vv. 3-4) is described in the four Gospels; the *Preaching* of the Gospel (v. 5) is the special theme of the Acts; the *Product* of the Gospel (v. 6) is exhibited in the rest of the New Testament. Under the second heading of these four come the great truths concerning Christ. There are His four Titles, His Incarnation, His Deity, His Sinlessness, His Death and Resurrection.

(c) *The Persons Addressed* (verse 7).

There were evidently several churches in Rome, meeting in different parts of the city; hence the Apostle does not address his Epistle to "the Church in Rome," but "to all that are in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints." These are essential facts in the community of life and the spiritual relationship of believers. Nowhere in the New Testament is a church mentioned as consisting of a group of churches in any locality, whether city, province, or country. There is the whole Church, the Body of Christ, and there are local churches, but the latter are not organised together as constituting a church. Each is on its separate basis, and dependent on the Lord.

In the greetings that follow, the fact that grace and peace come alike from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ is a testimony to the oneness of the Lord Jesus with the Father in the Godhead.

CHAPTER I.

SECTION 2.

1. 8-17—*Paul's interest in the saints at Rome.*

After the salutation and the thanksgiving in verse 8, Paul further writes of his own relationship to the Gospel. He serves God in his spirit (verse 9, R.V.). The word rendered " serve " is *latreuō*, which denotes service characterised by worship. The Apostle then describes the Gospel as " the Gospel of His Son." It is equally the Gospel of God (verse 1) and the Gospel of His Son (verse 9). Then, speaking of his desire toward the saints in Rome and his readiness to preach the glad tidings there (vv. 10-15), he says he is " not ashamed of the Gospel." It is here called simply " the Gospel " (R.V.).

Its character, contents and effects are next stated :

(1) " It is the power of God " (its *character*),

(2) " unto salvation to every one that believeth, whether Jew or Gentile (its *effect*)."

(3) Therein a righteousness of God is revealed, by faith unto faith (its *contents*).

(4) The righteous shall live by faith (its *second effect*).

OUTLINE NOTES ON ROMANS

DIVISION I.

UNIVERSAL GUILT.

CHAPTERS 1. 18—3. 20.

Section (1) 1. 18-32.

Human sin and Divine Retribution.

The Apostle now begins the main part of the Epistle and, describing man's unrighteousness, vindicates the righteousness of God. The vindication of God's righteousness is the first great object of the Epistle.

The unrighteousness of man consists in rejecting the revelation God has given of Himself in Creation and in thus holding down the truth in unrighteousness (v. 18)—not as A.V., "hold the truth," but holding it down, *i.e.*, restraining it from accomplishing its purposes in one's own heart as well as in that of others.

There are two Divine attributes that God has revealed in Creation: (1) His eternal power, (2) His Godhead. These were intended by Him to be recognised by man and there were to be two results from the recognition; man was (1) to glorify his Creator as God, (2) to give Him thanks (v. 21).

Three times in this chapter the power of God is mentioned; in connection with (1) the Resurrection

of His Son (v. 4), (2) the Gospel (v. 16), (3) Creation (v. 20).

Inasmuch as man refused to fulfil his responsibility in recognising His Creator, God dealt with him in retribution. Four headings will present the outline of this section :—

(a) Revelation (vv. 18-19).
(b) Responsibility (v. 20).
(c) Refusal (vv. 21-23).
(d) Retribution (vv. 24-32).

The consequences of men's refusal to glorify God were that they became vain in their reasonings and their heart was darkened. Idolatry took the place of the worship of God. They exchanged the truth of God for a lie (v. 25). Accordingly they were given up to uncleanness (vv. 21-27), and a reprobate mind, to do all manner of evil (vv. 28-32).

The following are the steps in man's downward path : (1) refusal to acknowledge God (v. 21), (2) vain reasonings and a darkened heart (vv. 21-22), (3) idolatry (v. 23), (4) uncleanness (vv. 24-27), (5) a reprobate mind (v. 28), (6) all manner of unrighteousness (vv. 29-31), (7) death (v. 32).

Section (2), 2. 1-10.

The Guilt of the Jew as well as the Gentile.

(a) *The Divine Judgment* (vv. 1-5).

In this chapter, though there is no statement at the outset that the Apostle is addressing a Jew, yet this

becomes clear as we read on. In the first chapter he has shown the sinfulness of the Gentiles. He now shows that the Jew, albeit he passes judgment upon the Gentiles for their misdeeds, is equally guilty. Indeed his object in the first main division of the Epistle (1. 18 to 3. 20) is to bring in the whole world guilty before God, and thus to prepare the way for declaring the grace of God through the redemption that is in Christ.

In the first five verses of this second chapter the judgment of God is set in contrast to the judgment which the Jew passes upon the Gentile. The passage states three things about the judgment of God :—

(1) It is according to truth (v. 2).

(2) An unrepentant Jew will not escape it (v. 3).

(3) It will be seen to be righteous in the coming day when it is carried into execution (v. 5).

(b) *The means of life* (6-10).

Verses 6-10 may seem at first sight to hold out the prospect that God is actually going to impart eternal life, apart from the Gospel. The condition is that a man must, by patience in well doing, seek for glory and honour and incorruption and work good. It becomes clear on careful reading, and connecting this section with its context, that the Apostle is really showing the impossibility of getting eternal life by this means. Just as God held out the promise to the Jew

that if he fulfilled the Law he would live, and the Law has proved only to be for his condemnation, so here, in the case of the Gentiles. The argument is parallel to that relating to the Law. If any man, Jew or Gentile, continues patiently in well doing and in working good, eternal life will be his portion, but no man has ever fulfilled these conditions; all have failed; all will therefore fail to obtain eternal life by that means. The passage, then, instead of holding out the prospect that God is eventually going to give eternal life to any one apart from Christ, only forms a part of the whole teaching of this portion of the Epistle, in revealing the sinfulness of man, and making known the righteousness of God's judgment upon his sin.

Section (3) 2. 11-29.
The Impartiality of God's Judgment.

(a) *The giving of the Law is no argument against it* (vv. 11-24).

In his argument, in the first part of this chapter, that the Jew alike with the Gentile is guilty before God, the Apostle has shown (1) that the Jew, though he judges others, practises the same things as the Gentiles and has been treasuring up wrath in the day of wrath (vv. 1-5); (2) that God has held out to Gentiles as well as to Jews an offer of eternal life on condition of continuous well-doing — though neither Jew nor Gentile has ever been able to obtain life by

that means—(vv. 6-10); (3) that the judgment of God is righteous and impartial (v. 2).

This last point is expanded in verses 11-16.

As to the coming judgment itself, the Gentiles, who have sinned without external law, must perish without the Law; the Jews, who had an external Law, will be judged by it. But the Gentiles have the law of conscience, and that law is equivalent to the Law given to the Jews (vv. 12-15). All must therefore be judged in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Christ (vv. 12, 16). That day is spoken of in two ways in this chapter:—

(1) "The day of wrath, and the revelation of the righteous judgment of God" (v. 5).

(2) "The day when God shall judge the secrets of men" (v. 16).

The subject of the judgment formed a distinct part of Paul's Gospel (v. 16).

The Apostle now lays guilt to the charge of the Jews from another point of view. The Jew boasts that (1) he bears the name of a Jew, (2) he rests in the Law, (3) he glories in God, (4) he knows His will, (5) he approves the things which are excellent, (6) he is confident of being (a) a guide, (b) a light, (c) a corrector, (d) a teacher, as he has in the Law a form of knowledge and of the truth. But, while preaching to others, he is himself a transgressor and causes the name of God to be blasphemed (vv. 17-24).

(b) *The appointment of circumcision is no argument against God's impartiality* (vv. 25-29).

So circumcision must be viewed from the Divine standpoint and not as the Jew sees it. A transgressor of the Law, albeit he is a Jew, is practically uncircumcised, while the Gentile who fulfils the Law is counted by God as circumcised, and would really be in a position to judge the Jew transgressor. A true Jew in God's sight is one inwardly, and circumcision is spiritual. The word "Jew" means "praise"; so he who is circumcised in heart has his "praise" of God.

The following points in this passage show the position of the Jew in regard to the Law. He :—

(1) rests upon it (v. 17).
(2) is instructed out of it (v. 18).
(3) has the form of knowledge in it (v. 20).
(4) has the form of the truth (v. 20).
(5) glories in it (v. 23).
(6) but transgresses it (v. 27).

Section (4) 3. 1-9.
The Real Position of the Jews.

(a) *A question and its answer* (3. 1-4).

After his indictment of the Jews in the second chapter the argument is advanced by the method of question and answer. There are four questions in the section before us; they are as follows :—

(1) *If the Jew is equally guilty with the Gentile,*

what advantage has the Jew? What profit is derived from circumcision? (verse 1).

To this the Apostle replies that the great advantage lies in the fact that to the Jews God intrusted His oracles. God's ways are perfect. His dealings with the Jews certainly were to their advantage. Lack of faith on their part could not nullify His faithfulness. God will always be justified in His words and will always prevail when He comes into judgment (verses 2-4).

(b) *An objection and its answer* (3. 5-18)

(2) *If then, as is a reasonable conclusion from this, man's unrighteousness only serves to commend God's righteousness, is God unrighteous in visiting men with wrath for that which makes for His glory*? (verse 5).

We might have expected that the objector would be made to say, "Is not God unrighteous?" in which case the objector would demand the answer "Yes." Instead of this, Paul, with a view to vindicate the character of God, puts the question in a form which demands a negative reply. The reply is to the effect that God, because He is God, is a Judge. It is an axiomatic truth with the writers of Scripture that God will judge the world. If the fact that man's sin gives evidence of God's holiness were to remove the possibility of God's punishing sin, He could not judge the world; thereby He would cease to discharge His function as God, and His Deity would thus be invalidated. But since He is God the judgment He

inflicts will be righteous in every case (verse 6).

(3) *But if "my lie" makes God's truthfulness abound and so enhances His glory, "why am I judged as a sinner?" and why not act on the principle of doing evil that good may come?* (verses 7, 8).

This question is an extension of the preceding one and completes the first section of the argument of this chapter. Paul's detractors, he says, reported that he taught this principle. But if the principle held good, so far from his being delivered from judgment on the ground that his lie enhanced God's glory, both Paul himself and those who slanderously brought the charge against him, must come under the judgment of God. On their own showing, however, the principle is wrong; God is right in His judgment, and they must suffer His righteous condemnation. Paul does not stay to discuss the point further, for God's position as Judge is impregnable.

(4) *If all this is so, are the Jews in worse case than the Gentiles?"* (verse 9, not as in A.V.).

That is to say, is the argument to lead to the conclusion that the Jews are in such a position that their privileges will bring them into greater condemnation? "No, in nowise," says the Apostle, "for we have before laid it to the charge of both Jew and Gentile that they are all under sin." This he confirms by quotations from the Septuagint Version of the Old Testament, chiefly from various Psalms, but also from Proverbs 1. 16, and Isaiah 59. 7-8.

These quotations consist of :—

(a) six general statements (verses 10-12);

(b) five specific sins (verses 13-15);

(c) three general statements (verses 16-18).

In verses 1-18, in vindicating the character of God, Paul speaks of :—

(1) the *faithfulness* of God and the unbelief of man (verse 3);

(2) The *truthfulness* of God and the falseness of man (verses 4, 7);

(3) The *righteousness* of God and the unrighteousness of man (verse 5).

Compare Revelation 19. 11.

(c) *The impossibility of justification by the Law* (3. 19-20).

The Apostle now pronounces sentence upon the condition of the Jews and Gentiles alike, showing that all are brought under the judgment of God, the effect of the Law and the efforts to keep it only being to make clear that no one can be justified by that means. There are four effects of the Law mentioned in *verses* 19-20. They are as follows :—

(1) Every mouth is stopped.

(2) All the world is brought under the judgment of God.

(3) No one can be justified by the works of the Law.

(4) It only brings the knowledge of sin.

This is really a conclusion to the subject taken up

in chapters 2 and 3. 1-18. The Jew rested upon the Law and gloried in it (2. 17, 23). Though it held out a promise of blessing if he kept it, actually it silenced his glorying, brought him under judgment and showed him his sinfulness.

Note.—The Law, as mentioned in verse 19, probably signifies more than the actual Law of Moses, for the preceding quotations which describe man's sinfulness are from Psalms and Isaiah; so perhaps we are to understand the term in its widest aspect. For this compare John 10. 34; 12. 34; 15. 25; and 1 Cor. 14. 21.

The word "flesh" in verse 20 denotes humanity in general, though there is also the suggestion of the weakness of man in contrast to God as his Judge.

DIVISION II.

JUSTIFICATION AND ITS EFFECTS.

CHAPTERS 3. 21—5. 21.

Section (1) 3. 21-26.

Justification through Faith.

(a) *The righteousness of God and faith in Christ* (3. 21-22).

In the 21st and following verses Paul shows in a striking contrast how a righteousness of God has been manifested in a different way from that in the giving of the Law. In is necessary to distinguish between the righteousness of God as referring to His own character, and that sense of the term which denotes the righteousness which He reckons to the believing sinner by a means which He has adopted consistently with His own character. In verse 21 the former is specially in view, and so in verse 25. While the Apostle is primarily vindicating the character of God, he shows how, consistently with this, the sinner is reckoned righteous. The fourth chapter looks upon the subject solely from that point of view.

In *verse* 21 he says that the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the Law, and is witnessed by the Law and the Prophets. Here the Law

stands for the Pentateuch. An example of each case of this witness is given in chapter 4, first in the case of Abraham, which is taken from the Law part of Scripture, and then in the words of David, taken from the Psalms, *i.e.*, the Prophetic part of Scripture.

Verse 22 shows that this righteousness of God is manifested in His dealings of grace with those who believe, whether Jew or Gentile, for "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." The basis upon which God justifies a sinner, or reckons him righteous, is "the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." On this ground God can regard as righteous the sinner who believes, and can do so consistently with His own righteousness.

Note the following contrasts:—

(a) "The Law" (verse 19), and "grace" (verse 24).

(b) "Through the Law" (verse 20), and "through redemption" (verse 24).

(c) "Under judgment" (verse 19), and "justified freely" (verse 24).

(d) "The works of the Law" (verse 20), and "faith in Jesus Christ" (verse 22).

(e) "All the world" (verse 19), and "them that believe" (verse 22).

(b) *Justification by His grace* (3. 23-24).

The subject taken up in the closing part of chapter 3 stands in direct contrast with the preceding section of the Epistle, from 1. 18 to 3. 20. That section was

devoted to the proof of the guilt of mankind in general, both Jew and Gentile, and of the impossibility of justification by the Law. Now we learn how the sinner is justified freely by God's grace. There is first the declaration of the righteous character of God exhibited in His plan of salvation (verses 21-23). Then there is a statement as to the means He has chosen. It is through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus (verse 24).

(c) *The manifestation of God's righteousness through Christ* (3. 25-26).

Verse 25 gives us a further vindication of God's righteousness, and especially in respect of His passing over of the sins done aforetime.

It is important to notice the correct rendering, as in the R.V. God set forth Christ Jesus, " to be a propitiation, through faith, by His blood." The words " by His blood " are to be taken with " propitiation." Our faith is not said to be in the blood, though that is the basis of our faith; faith is imposed in the living Person. The blood of Christ signifies that His atoning death was by the shedding of His blood.

By this means God displayed His righteousness " because of the passing over of the sins done aforetime, in the forbearance of God." Those who sinned in the period from the Fall to the Cross could receive the Divine pardon only prospectively in view of the sacrifice of Christ. The blood of bulls and goats could not put away sin, but God showed by these sacrifices on

what ground He could and would pardon the sinner. Hence the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ was an exhibition of God's righteousness in His actings of grace.

This subject of the vindication of the character of God is continued in verse 26, only here we see the purpose of the manifestation of God's righteousness in the death of Christ, namely, "that He might Himself be just, and the justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus."

Section (2) 3. 27-31.

All Boasting Excluded.

(a) *The unity of God's Being and the character of His work* (3. 27-30).

This leads the Apostle to speak of faith as a law, or principle, which excludes all human glorying. It shuts out all possibility of works as a means of justification (verses 27-28).

Verse 25 no doubt has Jews particularly in view; verse 26 includes the Gentiles. Hence the Apostle's argument, "Is God the God of the Jews only? Is He not the God of the Gentiles also? Yea, of Gentiles also" (verse 29); and the confirmation lies in the fact that "God is one," that is to say, there is not one God for the Jew and one for the Gentile.

But the argument is based not only upon the essential character of His Being, but also upon His work. He has adopted the same means of justification for

Jew and Gentile. As each has been shown to be guilty before God, so now each must derive the benefit of justification in the same way, namely, by faith.

There is a significant change of preposition in verse 30. While laying down that faith is essential both for Jew and Gentile, the Apostle says that God shall justify the circumcision *by* faith and the uncircumcision *through* faith. In the former case the word is literally " out of faith," and this seems to suggest that justification is not out of the Law as a possible source; the Law was held out to the Jews and they did seek righteousness from that source. There was no such external source indicated for the Gentile, however, so the uncircumcision is said to be justified simply " by means of faith."

(b) *The Law established* (3. 31).

In the closing verse of this chapter the Apostle shows that while the Law is of no avail for justification, faith does not make the Law of none effect. On the contrary, the argument he has been advancing only serves to establish the Law.

The following is an outline on the subject of faith as dealt with in this section :—

(1) Faith *instrumental* — righteousness comes through faith (verse 22).

(2) Faith *universal*—faith is open to all men (verse 22).

(3) Faith *basic*—the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ is the basis of faith (verse 25).

(4) Faith *a testimony to God's character*—justification by faith vindicates God's righteousness (verse 26).

(5) Faith *an excluding principle*—faith excludes glorying (verse 27).

(6) Faith *absolute*—faith and works have nothing in common regarding justification (verse 28).

(7) Faith *a testimony to God's Being*—it is arranged by the same Person for both Jew and Gentile (verse 30).

(8) Faith *confirmatory*—faith establishes the Law (verse 31).

Section (3) 4. 1-16.

Evidences that Righteousness is Reckoned on the Condition of Faith.

(a) *Twofold Witness from the Law and the Prophets* (4. 1-6).

The Apostle now quotes two instances from the Old Testament, to confirm the truth that righteousness is reckoned to the sinner on the ground of faith and not on that of works. He takes the case of Abraham in Genesis, and the testimony of David in Psalm 32, and thus shows how, as he has said, the righteousness of God apart from the Law has been witnessed by the Law and the Prophets (3. 21). The history of Abraham is taken from the part of the Old Testament called the Law; the Psalms of David come under the heading "the Prophets." "Abraham believed God and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness"

(verse 3); "David pronounceth blessing upon the man unto whom God reckoneth righteousness apart from works" (verse 6).

(b) *Twofold Proof from History* (4. 7-16).

In connection with these instances two facts are now brought before us in the advancement of the argument. The first is that the blessedness of which David speaks cannot possibly be confined to the Jewish nation. For righteousness was reckoned to Abraham while he was yet in uncircumcision. Circumcision, being a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he already possessed, could not therefore be a condition upon which the blessing of righteousness was granted. The Divine object in reckoning him righteous apart from circumcision was that he might be the father of all, whether Jew or Gentile, who believe and have righteousness reckoned to them (verse 11). Even the Jew, who claims Abraham as his natural ancestor, can receive the spiritual blessings God has for him only on the same ground as the believing Gentile. The Jew must "walk in the steps of that faith of Abraham which he had in uncircumcision" (verse 12).

The second fact is that the promise given to Abraham concerning his seed was made before the giving of the Law. It was therefore conditional solely upon faith, and on this account was a matter of pure grace. Accordingly, as with the first fact, that righteousness was reckoned to Abraham prior to circumcision, so

with this, the fulfilment of the promise is secured not only to Abraham's natural descendants but to his spiritual children, those who are "of the faith of Abraham" (verses 14-16).

The following lists give in outline headings the main subjects of this section of the Epistle :—

RIGHTEOUSNESS RECKONED.

(1) The fact (verse 3).
(2) The contrast (verse 4).
(3) The condition (verse 5).
(4) The testimony (verses 6-8).
(5) The scope (verses 9-12).
(6) The confirmation (verse 11).
(7) The effect (verses 13-16).

THE BLESSINGS OF GRACE THROUGH FAITH.

(1) Righteousness reckoned (verses 3-13).
(2) Iniquities forgiven (verse 7).
(3) Sins covered (verse 7).
(4) The promise of inheritance (verses 13-16).

Section (4) 4. 17-25.

Abraham's Faith.

(a) *The character of his faith* (4. 17-21).

The latter part of the fourth chapter takes up the subject of Abraham's faith as a proof that God reckons righteousness to man solely on the condition of faith. We have remarked that in the earlier part of the chapter the Apostle states (1) the fact of

Abraham's faith, (2) its priority both to circumcision and to the Law, (3) its effects both for the believing Jews and the Gentiles. The character of Abraham's faith is now described as follows :—

(1) He believed in God as the One "who quickeneth the dead, and calleth the things that are not, as though they were" (verse 17); in other words, he believed in the omnipotence of God.

(2) His faith was characterised by hope, and that contrary to natural expectation. "In hope he believed against hope" (verse 18), that is to say, though he naturally could not expect to be a "father of many nations," on account of his old age, yet he simply relied upon the word of God, "so shall thy seed be."

(3) He fully took in the natural circumstances. He was not blind to facts, nor did he ignore them, but these facts did not weaken his faith. He did consider his own body as good as dead, since he was about a hundred years old, and he did consider "the deadness of Sarah's womb," verse 19 (the R.V. gives the correct rendering). But having faced the situation as it was by nature, and the apparent impossibility that God's word could be fulfilled, he turned from those circumstances to the promise of God Himself.

(4) "He wavered not through unbelief" (v. 20). The promise of God was sufficient to prevent this.

(5) On the contrary he "waxed strong through faith." There could be no neutral position. We are either weakened through lack of faith, or become

strong through it. It is not that the faith itself becomes stronger. We either take God at His word, or we do not. If we do, we are spiritually strengthened.

(6) He gave glory to God. That is always the character of faith. God is glorified by it. Faith is simply the response of the soul to a word from God, and God expresses His approval of the glory thus given to Him by responding to faith in the fulfilment of His word.

(7) He was fully assured of the fulfilment of what God had said. Thus he not only turned from the seemingly impossible natural situation to the promise, but he was occupied with the Person of God Himself, as One who, having promised, was able also to perform.

(b) *The effect of his faith* (4. 22).

The Apostle next reminds us again of the fact of the written record and of its importance for us. At the beginning of the chapter he asked, "What saith the Scriptures?" He answered it by quoting the Genesis record. Now at the end of the chapter, having confirmed the fact that Abraham's faith was reckoned to him for righteousness (v. 22), he states the object of the narrative.

(c) *The purposes of the record* (4. 23-25).

It was written not for Abraham's sake only, that is to say, not merely by way of bearing witness to the fact that Abraham had believed and was thus reck-

oned righteous, but for our sakes also (v. 24). Now comes the application to our faith. Abraham believed Him who quickeneth the dead, that is, who could bring life out of natural deadness. We also believe in Him who quickens the dead, but in this case the power has already been put forth. We believe on Him "that raised up Jesus from the dead" (v. 24). So we have in this chapter (1) the fact of the record, v. 3, (2) the object of the record, v. 24.

This leads the Apostle to state two great foundation truths of the Christian faith, namely, the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

After illustrating from the Old Testament the doctrine of justification by faith, and applying the illustrations to the case of those "who believe on Him that raised Jesus our Lord from the dead" (4. 24), the Apostle brings that part of his argument to a close by stating these basic facts of the faith. They form an immediate introduction to chapter 5. They are that Christ (1) was delivered up for our trespasses, (2) was raised for our justification. The preposition rendered "for" means "on account of," not "with a view to." The Apostle has shown that the death of Christ is the all-sufficient ground upon which God justifies the believer. We may gather, therefore, that we are to understand this verse as stating that Christ was delivered up because we had sinned, and was raised again because the atoning work by which we are justified had been accomplished.

CHAPTER V.

Chapter 5—Introductory.

The fifth chapter shows us what we have *through* Christ, the sixth what we are *in* Christ.

"Through Christ" is the key note of chapter 5. The chapter begins by summing up the argument of the section of the Epistle from 3. 21 to 4. 25, in the words "Being therefore justified by faith." This at the same time introduces the subject of the effects of the Death and Resurrection of Christ. These are set out in two distinct sections: (a) verses 1-11, (b) verses 12-21, the whole being based on the great doctrine of 3. 21-26, which should be read in connection with this chapter.

Section (a) presents the subject as to its bearing upon the individual believer; section (b) as to its bearing upon the human race. Note how the leading thought is expressed at the beginning and end both of section (a) and of the chapter: section (a) begins and ends with: "through our Lord Jesus Christ" (verses 1, 11); the chapter ends with: "through Jesus Christ our Lord," the order of the titles being changed (verse 21). In the latter the title "Lord" has special emphasis, and in this we may perhaps see an intimation of the teaching to follow in chapter 6.

This is how the

Death of Christ

is set forth in chapter 5.

(1) " Christ died for the ungodly " (verse 6).

(2) " Christ died for us " (verse 8).

(3) We are " justified by His blood " (verse 9).

(4) " We were reconciled to God through the death of His Son " (verse 10).

(5) " One act of righteousness " (verse 18, note R.V.).

(6) " The obedience of the One " (verse 19).

The " one act of righteousness " is the act of Christ in dying for us. So, again " the obedience " is the same consummating act of His entire obedience; " He became obedient even unto death."

The chapter states the following as

THE EFFECTS OF THE DEATH OF CHRIST:

(1) Justification (verses 1, 9, 16, 18).

(2) Peace with God (verse 1).

(3) Access by faith into grace (verse 2).

(4) Rejoicing,

- (a) In the hope of the glory (verse 2).
- (b) In our tribulations (verse 3).
- (c) In God (verse 11).

(5) Salvation,

- (a) From coming wrath (verse 9).
- (b) By His life (verse 10).

(6) Reconciliation to God (verses 10, 11).

(7) Grace abounding (verses 17, 20).

(8) The free gift of righteousness (verses 15, 16, 17, 18).

(9) Many made righteous (verse 19).

(10) Reigning in life (verse 17).

(11) Grace reigning unto righteousness (verse 21).

(12) Eternal life (verse 21).

All this constitutes a display of

DIVINE GRACE,

which is described as follows: it is—

(1) "This grace wherein we stand" (verse 2).

(2) "The grace of God" (verse 15).

(3) "The grace of the One Man, Jesus Christ" (verse 15).

(4) "The abundance of grace" (verse 17).

(5) "Grace" (abounding, reigning) (verses 20, 21).

This is how it has acted:—

(1) We have access into it by faith (verse 2).

(2) We stand in it (verse 2).

(3) It has abounded unto "the many" (verse 15).

(4) It has abounded more exceedingly where sin abounded (verse 20).

(5) The gift of righteousness has come by it (verse 15).

(6) It reigns through righteousness (verse 21).

The section of the Epistle from 3. 21 to 4. 25 is occupied with the NECESSITY OF FAITH apart from works, as a means of justification. Chapter 5 shows us the "EFFECTS OF FAITH."

Section (5) 5. 1-11.

The Effects of Faith (Individual.)

(a) *What faith is the ground of* (5. 1-5).

Firstly, faith is the ground of

(a) justification—(verse 1).

(b) access into grace—(verse 2).

Secondly, all this is the reason for

(a) having peace with God—(verse 1).

(b) rejoicing in the hope of the glory of God —(verse 2).

(c) rejoicing in tribulation—(verse 3).

Thirdly, the following are the causes for (c) :—

(1) tribulation worketh patience.

(2) patience worketh probation.

(3) probation worketh hope.

(4) hope putteth not to shame.

Fourthly, the cause for (c) 4 is that the love of God has been shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit. Thus the effects of faith are traced back to the love of God.

God's love and our faith! When these meet we are there and then brought into union with Christ, with all the blessings, privileges and responsibilities enumerated in the chapters before us.

Note that in this section of chapter 5 faith, hope and love are linked together.

Faith is prominent in verses 1 and 2a.

Hope „ „ „ „ 2b to 5a.

Love „ „ „ „ 5b to 8.

Faith introduces us into the enjoyment of the love of God, and these two are the means of inspiring us with hope.

CHAPTER V.

Four things are pointed out in regard to our hope :—

(1) It is characterised by joy (verse 2).

(2) It is confirmed by the endurance of tribulation (verses 3, 4).

(3) Its effect is confidence (verse 5).

(4) Its basis is the love of God (verse 5).

The combined themes of faith and hope recall the same association in the case of Abraham, in 4. 18 : " In hope set on God, Abraham exercised faith in Him against natural hope."

Verse 5 contains the first mention in this Epistle of the Holy Spirit in connection with the work of God in the believer. This passing reference in verse 5 is anticipative of the subject of the Person and work of the Spirit of God in chapter 8.

(b) *The proof of God's love* (5. 6-8).

The mention of the love of God as having been shed abroad in our hearts through the Spirit leads now to a statement of the proof that God loves us. The proof consists of three parts :—

(a) an appeal to the fact of the Death of Christ (verse 6).

(b) a comparison with human love (verse 7).

(c) A re-statement of the fact of Christ's death as evidence of the superiority of God's love (verse 8).

The phrase " while we were yet weak " (verse 6) recalls the argument of the whole section from 3. 19

to 4. 25, namely, that it is impossible to obtain justification by works. The phrase "in due season," recalls 3. 25, 26, where the contrast is presented between "aforetime" (verse 25), and "this present season" (verse 26). The statement "Christ died for the ungodly" recalls 3. 24, 26, which speaks of redemption and propitiation by the blood of Christ.

Note the phrase "His own love" (verse 8). The word "own" gives uniqueness to God's love, which stands out as not only superior to human love, but also as distinct from it.

(c) *Inferences from the proof* (5. 9-11).

A proof of God's love having been given in verses 6-8, in support of the assertion that our hope cannot put us to shame because of His love (verse 5), the Apostle draws in *verse* 9 an inference from this proof. If Christ died for us when we were sinners, much more will He save us now that we are justified. If God showed His love toward His enemies, much more will He save His friends. *Verse* 10 runs parallel to, and expands, verse 9, as follows:—

(a) having been justified
(b) by His blood
(c) we shall be saved
(d) through Him.
(a) having been reconciled to God
(b) through the death of His Son
(c) we shall be saved
(d) by His life.

The Apostle omits the mention of faith now, because he is speaking of justification simply as an evidence of the love of God. Faith can add nothing to God's work of grace, it can only accept.

The wrath of God from which we shall be saved (verse 9), includes the wrath that is coming upon the world at the end of this age. The Church is to be delivered from that (see also 1 Thess. 1. 10, R.V., and 5. 9, 10). In verse 10 stress is laid upon the fact that Christ lives. Our present preservation depends upon that, and likewise owing to it we shall be delivered from the coming wrath.

In several passages in this part of the Epistle the word "shall" conveys something more than futurity. It speaks of the inevitable consequences, both in the present and in the future, of what has already taken place. Instances of this occur in the next chapter.

Verse 11 speaks of the present time. Besides our present and future salvation we rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, as those who have been reconciled through Him. Verses 9-11 may be compared with verses 1, 2, as follows:—

Verses 1, 2,
(a) justification by faith leads to
(b) rejoicing in the hope of the glory of God
(c) through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Verses 9-11,
(a) justification by His blood leads to
(b) rejoicing in God

(c) through our Lord Jesus our Christ.

Note the development of thought in verses 9-11, as to what Christ has done for us by His Death, and what He is to us in His life. Taking as a heading the statement in verse 8,

CHRIST DIED FOR US,

the next three verses set this forth by way of cause and effect, as follows:—

(1) Verse 9, by His blood (justification).

(2) Verse 10, through the Death of His Son (reconciliation).

(3) Verse 11, through the Lord Jesus Christ Himself (rejoicing).

In verse 9 the mention of His blood points to His Death. In verse 10 we have His Death definitely stated. In verse 11 His three great titles are given. Thus we have "His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord," as in the introduction to the Epistle (1. 3, 4).

Section (6) 5. 12-21.

The Effects of Faith (*Racial.*)

(a) *The Judgment on Adam reversed* (5. 12-19).

In this second part of chapter 5 the Apostle continues the subject of the effects of the Death of Christ, with reference to the human race. The chief themes before us now are, on the one hand, Sin, Death, and the Law; on the other hand, Righteousness, Life and Grace, all serving to illustrate the great subject of the justification of sinners on a basis

of righteousness. The 12th *verse* introduces a comparison, which the Apostle does not complete till verses 18, 19. Verses 13 to 17 are of a parenthetic character. Verses 20, 21, contain statements arising out of the argument and bring this phase of it to a close.

The object in breaking off the comparison in verse 12 is that the fact essential to the force of the argument may be restated, namely, that all men are under condemnation on account of sin.

The main point in the whole section is the comparison between Adam and Christ, in this respect, that as Adam was the means of bringing in sin and death, Christ has brought in justification and life.

First then as to Adam, the argument is as follows: (1) a penalty implies a broken law; (2) death is a penalty; (3) now sin is not imputed when there is no law; (4) Adam's sin was the transgression of a law, so were the sins of the people of Israel under the Mosaic law; (5) between Adam and the time of Moses sin did not partake of the character of transgression, for there was no law (the law of conscience is not in view here); (6) yet death reigned from Adam to Moses; (7) as then death is a penalty of a broken law, all men were subject to death because of Adam's transgression, his posterity sharing thus in the effects of the act done by the head of the race (verses 13, 14).

That point being established, Paul can now state the parallel between Adam and Christ. Adam was a figure of Christ (verse 14). As we are condemned in

Adam, so we are justified in Christ. The Apostle is not here speaking of the effects of the Law; this he does later. He is showing how sin and death have become universal because of Adam's sin. As these came through the act of another, so justification and life can, in like manner, become ours only through the act of Another, even Christ.

The drawing of the parallel leads to the presentation of three contrasts. These are introduced by the statement, "But not as the trespass, so also is the free gift," and are as follows:—

(1) Through Adam's trespass many died, but through Jesus Christ grace hath abounded unto many. The contrast here is one of *quality;* it lies in the word "abounded." Grace has come with greater power and effect than the penalty of sin, and does far more than restore man to what he was in innocence (verse 15).

(2) "Judgment came of one unto condemnation: but the free gift came of many trespasses unto justification." The contrast here is one of *quantity*. Condemnation was called down by one trespass. Justification is declared notwithstanding many (verse 16).

(3) Death reigned through Adam and his trespass, whereas through Jesus Christ those that receive abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness shall reign in life. The precise contrast to "death reigned" would have been "life shall reign," but the distinction

is far greater than this. It is not that life reigns instead of death, but that those who receive grace will themselves reign in life (verse 17).

We must notice the limitation in verse 17, for it has a bearing on what follows. On the one hand there is universal sin and death, on the other hand life is bestowed upon those that receive grace.

The way is now open for the completion of the comparison introduced in verse 12, and this the Apostle does in verse 18. "As through one trespass the judgment came unto all men unto condemnation, even so through one act of righteousness (note the correct R.V. here; for we are not justified by the righteousness of Christ but by the righteous act on the Cross) the free gift came unto all men to justification of life." The gift was free for all; but only those who accept it are justified. It is this limitation which leads the Apostle to speak of "the many" in verse 19 instead of "all." He is here regarding the subject from the point of view of the result, for good or ill, of the acts of the heads of the respective companies. He does not say "as all were made sinners, so all shall be made righteous." Because "the many" in the first part of the sentence embraces all mankind, we may not conclude that "the many" in the last part similarly embraces all mankind. He is speaking here of the effect, upon those ranged under the two heads, of the respective acts of those heads.

Note also that the obedience of the one in verse 19 is identical with "the one act of righteousness" in verse 18. Each refers to the Cross.

(b) *The Law given to prepare for the reversal of the judgment* (5. 20, 21).

The closing two verses of the chapter present the preceding contrast in the light of the Law. The Law came in beside, that, not sin, but the trespass might abound, *i.e.,* in order that the true character of sin might become manifest, a subject developed later on in chapter 7. Grace, however, has gone even beyond this, and has abounded unto many. Finally, the argument is brought to its climax in the last verse by the contrast between the Law, Sin, and Death, and Grace, Righteousness, and Life, and the chapter ends as it began with its leading note, "through Jesus Christ our Lord."

DIVISION III.

THE NEW LIFE IN CHRIST.

CHAPTERS 6-8.

A. *The New Life in Christ, unto God* (Chapter 6).
B. *The New Life in Christ in relation to the Law* (Chapter 7).
C. *The New Life in Christ in relation to the Spirit* (Chapter 8).

A. Chapter 6.

The New Life in Christ, unto God.

The Apostle's aim in this chapter is to show the entire inconsistency of continuing in sin after being justified by grace. He makes clear that newness of life and continuance in sin are a contradiction of terms. In developing the subject he describes the character of the new life in Christ. Chapter 5 constitutes the basis of the teaching of chapter 6. Chapter 5 speaks of the means by which God has bestowed spiritual life; chapter 6 of how we are to live the life.

The leading theme of this chapter is *Union with Christ;* that is the very essence of the new life. While the key-note of chapter 5 is *"through Christ,"* that of chapter 6 is *"in Christ."* The R.V. rendering "in" instead of "through" in verses 11 and 23 is correct.

There we should not read "through Jesus Christ" as in chapter 5, but "in Christ Jesus." In the fifth chapter the order of the titles is suggestive of the fact that the One who here accomplished our redemption through His death, is now in exaltation and glory. Here in chapter 6 the order is reversed throughout. "In Christ Jesus" (verses 3, 11, 23) suggests that we are in union of life with Him in the glory, on the ground of what He accomplished on the Cross.

Chapter 6 has another key-note—"*unto God.*" That expresses how the new life is to be lived (see verses 10, 11, 13, 22). We might therefore put as a heading to chapter 6, *UNION WITH CHRIST,* or *IN CHRIST, UNTO GOD.* The immediate basis of the subject of chapter 6 regarding life in Christ is to be found in the closing verses of chapter 5, which speaks of

(1) reigning in life . . . (verse 17).
(2) justification of life . . . (verse 18).
(3) grace reigning through righteousness unto eternal life . . . (verse 21).

We have pointed out that the characteristic feature of the sixth chapter is its contrasts. They are as follows:—

(a) Righteousness is contrasted with
  (1) unrighteousness . . . (verse 13).
  (2) death . . . (verse 16).
  (3) sin . . . (verses 18, 20).
  (4) uncleanness . . . (verse 19).

(5) iniquity . . . (verse 19).

(b) Sin is contrasted with

(1) God . . . (verses 10, 11, 13, 22, 23).

(2) obedience . . . (verse 16).

(3) righteousness . . . (verses 18, 20).

(c) Death is contrasted with

(1) life . . (verses 2, 4, 5, 8, 10, 11, 13, 21 and 22, 23).

(2) resurrection . . . (verse 5).

(d) Liberty is contrasted with bondage . . . (verses 16 to 18, 20 to 22).

The contrasts between sin and God (see (b) (1) above) are as follows :—

(1) Christ died unto *sin*—He liveth unto God . . . (verse 10).

(2) We are to reckon ourselves to have died unto *sin*—to be alive unto *God* . . . (verse 13).

(3) We are not to present ourselves unto *sin*—but unto *God* . . . (verse 13).

(4) We have been made free from *sin*—and have become servants to *God* . . . (verse 22).

(5) The wages of *sin* is death—the gift of *God* is eternal life . . . (verse 23).

The contrasts between life and death (see (c) (1) above) are as follows :—

(1) Having *died* to sin, how can we *live* in it? . . . (verse 2).

(2) Baptized into *death,* we are to walk in newness of *life* . . . (verses 4, 5).
(3) We *died* with Christ, we are to *live* with Him . . . (verse 8).
(4) Christ *died* unto sin, He *lives* unto God . . . (verse 10).
(5) We have *died* to sin and are to be *alive* unto God . . . (verse 11).
(6) We are *alive* from the *dead* . . . (verse 13).
(7) The end of sin is *death* . . . the end of sanctification is *life* . . . (verses 21, 22).
(8) *Death* is the wages of sin, *life* is the gift of God . . . (verse 23).

The chapter presents the subject of union with Christ in the following seven respects, which we may put in chronological order :—

(1) *Crucifixion*—" our old man was crucified with Him " . . . (verse 6).
(2) *Death*—" we died with Christ " . . . (verse 8).
(3) *Burial*—" we were buried with Him " . . . (verse 4).
(4) *Spiritual resurrection*—" like as Christ was raised, so we also " . . . (verse 4).
(5) *Life unto God*—" reckon ye also yourselves to be . . . alive unto God in Christ Jesus " . . . (verse 11).

(6) *Physical resurrection*—" we shall be united with Him by the likeness of His resurrection " . . . (verse 5).

(7) *Life with Christ*—" we shall also live with Him " . . . (verse 8).

The last statement includes, as pointed out below, the present life, but it also necessarily includes the resurrection life beyond.

We will now consider the chapter in closer detail. It is divided into two sections, each ending with the phrase " in Christ Jesus our Lord." The first section, verses 1-11, speaks of the inconsistency of continuing in sin, owing to our newness of life in Christ. The second section, verses 12-23, speaks of the same thing from the point of view of service unto God.

Section (1) 6. 1-11.

The Inconsistency of Continuing in Sin.

In this section we are shown that there must be no continuance in sin for three reasons :—

(a) *Because of death to sin* (6. 1-3).

In answer to the suggestion that continuance in sin may make grace to abound, the Apostle argues, " We who died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein? " Our baptism into Christ Jesus was baptism into His death. It is, therefore, as preposterous to think of our pursuing a course of sin as it is to think of a dead man engaging in the ordinary activities of life.

(b) *Because of resurrection life* (6. 4-9).

This, too, is set forth by baptism. The glory of the Father, by which Christ was raised, is to be displayed in our case by our walking in newness of life (verse 4). Verse 5 is explanatory of this, and for that reason we should regard the statement, "For if we have become united with Him by the likeness of His death, we shall be also by the likeness of His resurrection," not merely as referring to the future, though the future is included, but rather as expressing the inevitable consequences, both present and future, of our identification with Christ in His Death. This use of the word "shall" to express an assured result in the present time we have pointed out above, and that this verse refers firstly to our present life is confirmed by verses 6 and 7, which state that our old nature was crucified with Him, so that "the body of sin might be done away, that so we should no longer be in bondage to sin. For he that hath died is justified from sin." That is to say, when execution has taken place all legal claims have been discharged; there can be no renewal of punishment. Of what use would it be to punish a corpse? The death sentence cannot be carried out again in the case of a believer. But, more than this, he has not only been executed in the death of Christ, he is living in union with Him. Verse 8 sets this forth. Again, the statement "we believe that we shall also live with Him" expresses not merely futurity but the inevitable result of our having died with Christ. There can be no other con-

sequence of this than that we live with Him now, and shall do so for ever. The next verses, which refer to the present time, confirm this. Death cannot break in upon this union of life, for Christ will never die again; "death no more hath dominion over Him"; so neither is it to have dominion over those who are identified with Him in life (verse 9).

(c) *Because of our attitude toward God* (6. 10, 11). Our life is to be a life *unto God,* and with that condition sin is entirely incompatible. In this, too, we are identified with Christ: "The death that He died, He died unto sin, once for all," that is, in making expiation for sin He finished completely His work regarding it, "but the life that He liveth He liveth unto God." So we are to reckon ourselves "dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus" (verses 10. 11).

This section then, in a threefold way, gives the first part of the answer to the question in verse 1, "Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?" This cannot be, for (1) we have suffered execution in the death of Christ; (2) we are in newness of life, and therefore in freedom from bondservice to sin; (3) we are to live as Christ lives, unto God.

Section (2) 6. 12-23.
Service unto Righteousness.

While the leading thought in the first part of this chapter is *newness of life in Christ* (verses 1-11), the

leading thought in the last part (verses 12-23) is *service unto righteousness,* the keynote of the whole being, as we have seen, *unto God.* The new relationship of believers, as servants, or bondservants, to righteousness, is made the more conspicuous by a contrast with their former life of bondservice to sin.

(a) *The character of the service* (6. 12-18).

In the first part of this second section the *character of the service* is viewed in regard to the obedience involved in it, whether to sin or to righteousness (verses 12-18); in the latter part the *consequence of the service* is shown in each respect under the metaphor of " fruit " (verses 19-23).

Firstly, the Apostle gives two prohibitions: (1) we are not to let sin reign in our mortal body that we should obey its lusts; (2) we are not to present our members unto sin as instruments of unrighteousness. Secondly, in contrast to these, there are two positive injunctions: (1) we are to present ourselves unto God, as being alive from the dead; (2) we are to present our members as instruments of righteousness unto God (verses 12, 13). The mention of sin as reigning recalls 5. 21. If we let sin reign in us, we are practically where we were before we had life in Christ. The 13th verse explains the 11th; it shows how, in presenting ourselves to God, and our members as instruments of righteousness, we reckon ourselves alive unto Him in actual experience.

The word rendered " present " is in different tenses

in the original in the two parts of the verse. The first is in the present continuous tense, *i.e.*, we are not to be presenting our members unto sin as was our habit when unregenerate; the second is in the aorist, or momentary tense, *i.e.*, we are to present our whole being unto God as a decisive act with permanent results. The 14th verse confirms the 12th and 13th, resuming, in the word "dominion," the thought of sin's reigning, and recalling the subject of grace in the fifth chapter. The word rendered "dominion" expresses the power exercised by the reign. We may render literally by "sin shall not lord it over you." To continue in sin is to be under its tyranny.

In the 15th verse the Apostle resumes the question in the 1st verse, changing the mode of expression to suit the subject of dominion. Here the question is again asked whether we shall sin, as we are not under law but under grace, and this serves to show in another way the impossibility of such a thing. In verses 1 to 11 the impossibility was shown in the fact that we have died to sin, and now have life in Christ; here in verses 15 to 23 the idea is repudiated because of the effects of service to sin. To present oneself to any one so as to obey him is to enter into bondservice to him. If sin is our master death results, if obedience is our master the effect is righteousness (verse 16).

The Apostle now gives thanks to God that, whereas bondservice to sin was the former condition of his

readers, they became obedient from the heart to that form, or mould, of teaching whereunto they were delivered when they received Christ (verse 17). We must take the R.V. here. Paul is speaking of the teaching of the Gospel under the metaphor of a cast, or frame, into which molten material is poured so as to take its shape. To become obedient to the Word of God is to be conformed to Christ through its teachings. Verse 18 gathers up the preceding argument, pointing out that having been freed from sin we exchange masters and become servants to righteousness. We cannot serve two masters.

(b) *The consequences of the service* (6. 19-23).

Having thus overthrown the argument that we may sin because we are under grace, he exhorts us again to present our members as servants to righteousness, that is, to carry out in practical life the effects of the change to which he has referred. Again the contrast is presented both between the two forms of service and their respective effects. Formerly the members were presented as servants to uncleanness and to iniquity, with the result that iniquity developed and increased; now the result of presenting our members as servants to righteousness is sanctification. We prove that we are entirely set apart unto God (verse 19).

Verses 20 to 22 contain the last of the series of contrasts in this chapter. There are four ideas:—

(1) we were servants to sin; now we are servants to God.

(2) we were free in regard to righteousness (*i.e.*, free as regards any relationship with righteousness, and therefore given up to unrighteousness); now we are free from sin (*i.e.*, as a master).

(3) there was no fruit from the shameful things which characterised our former life; we now have fruit unto sanctification.

(4) the end (*i.e.*, the destiny) of the former things was death (the negation of fruitfulness); the end (destiny) of our present service is eternal life (the power for fruitfulness).

In the last verse the metaphor of fruit, or advantage, is changed to that of wages, and the former thought of unpaid slavery is changed to that of hired service. This is in order to show that sin deserves death; it is its just recompense. On the other hand, "the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." So that there can be no pardon of sins without atonement. Merit is excluded. "Life in Christ Jesus"—how beautiful a climax to the argument of the whole chapter of which this subject is the main theme!

Note that neither is death cessation of existence, nor is life mere prolongation of existence. Death is a change of state; spiritually it denotes separation from God: life is the enjoyment of activity; its essence is communion with God.

(B). Chapter 7.

The New Life in Christ in Relation to the Law.

In order to understand the seventh chapter it is necessary to read it as a development of the teaching of the fifth and sixth, and further as introductory to the eighth chapter. In the fifth chapter the Apostle showed what grace had wrought in bringing us into justification and life. In the sixth he defended this new position against the presumptuous argument as to the possibility of continuing in sin, and showed that being under grace and not under law, our very newness of life both demands service to God and empowers us to render it.

Section (3) 7. 1-6.

Freed from the Law.

Having stated, then, that we are not under the Law (6. 14), he now proves in the seventh chapter the truth of this position, first making clear by an illustration from nature how it is that we have been set free from the Law (verses 1 to 6). In the latter part of the seventh chapter, in order to guard against the idea that our freedom from the Law argues a defect in it, he vindicates its character. Using, therefore, the words of 6. 14, we may write, as a heading for the seventh chapter, "Freed from the Law."

Again, bearing in mind that this chapter is only the second part of the whole subject which occupies chapter 6 to 8, namely, the new life, we must notice

also how the two leading thoughts of chapter 6, "*in Christ*" and "*unto God,*" are continued in chapter 7 (see verse 4). Only now, the first of these, union with Christ, is viewed in the light of an illustration taken from the marriage bond, and as to the second, "unto God," the two thoughts of fruit and service are recalled from the sixth chapter and are shown to be the outcome of this union (verses 4-6).

We will now follow the argument in these six verses. They may be divided into two parts: (A) *illustration* (verses 1-3); (B) *application* (verses 4-6).

(A) *Illustration* (*7.* 1-3).

This is given as follows:—

(a) *A general principle of law* (verse 1):

"The law hath dominion over a man for so long time as he liveth." The Apostle is referring to the Law of Moses. At the same time he is speaking to those who, whether Jews or Gentiles by birth, were acquainted with the principles of law, and so were familiar with the principle conveyed in this statement. The point is that law is binding upon a man only while he lives and no longer. Death looses legal bonds.

(b) *A particular instance* (verses 2, 3):

This consists of three chief details—

(1) the marriage bond (verse 2);

(2) the bond dissolved by the death of the husband (verse 2);

(3) the second marriage (verse 3).

The woman whose husband has died is discharged

from the law that binds her to him. The death of her first husband makes void her status as a wife in the eyes of the law. She is therefore discharged from the prohibition against her marrying another man.

"The law of the husband" means the law concerning the husband. The *basis* of this law is the primal institution given in Eden (Gen. 2. 24); its *legal enactment* is the seventh commandment (Exod. 20. 14).

At the end of verse 3 the original reads, not, "so that she is," as in the English versions, but "so that she may be," expressing, that is to say, not the result but the purpose of the freedom consequent upon the husband's death. This is important, as it is an essential part of the analogy in the following verses.

(B) *Application* (7. 4-6).

This runs parallel to the illustration, with one exception:—

(1) The union between the man; as he is in the flesh, and the Law;

(2) The death of the former "through the body of Christ," dissolving that union;

(3) Our new union with Christ.

To put this more fully:—

(1) Parallel to the union between the first husband and the wife is the union between the Law and our old self.

(2) Parallel in idea, but in point of fact in contrast, to the death of the first husband, is the death of our

former self. The contrast lies in this, that in the illustration the husband dies, in the application the latter remains but our former self dies.

(3) Parallel to the marriage between the wife and the second husband is the union between the believer and Christ: "Ye were made dead to the law through the body of Christ, that ye might be joined to Another, even to Him who was raised from the dead."

Some take the first husband to be our old nature, "the old man," to which as long as it was alive we were bound under the Law, just as the wife is bound to her husband by law. At first sight that seems a closer analogy, as the Law is the binding principle in each case. In both explanations the contrast between the illustration and the application remains; in whichever way we regard it, it is that which corresponds to the wife that dies, whereas in the illustration the wife remains alive. But this second explanation, while it may seem simpler, is hardly consistent with the 6th verse, which says that we have died "to that in which we were holden," that is to say, the Law. The R.V. "having died" gives the correct rendering, as the Law does not die.

Section (4) 7. 7-25.

The true character of the Law.

This section is divided into two parts: (a) verses 7-13; (b) verses 14-25. In (a) the Apostle, while main-

taining the integrity of the Law, shows its power to produce conviction of sin, thus explaining the statement in 3. 20, that through the Law comes the knowledge of sin. In (b) he shows that while the Law enlightens the conscience it cannot deliver from the dominion of sin.

The whole of these two sections of the seventh chapter, from verse 7 to the end, is an amplification of Paul's insistence in the first six verses on the necessity of being freed from the Law. The purpose is twofold: (1) retrospective, to present in this special manner the effects of grace which have already been set forth in chapters 3 to 6; (2) prospective, to prepare the way for truth relating to the power of the Holy Spirit, by whose ministry; on the ground of the Death of Christ, deliverance alone comes and the ordinance of the Law is fulfilled in us (chapter 8).

(a) *The power of the Law to convict of sin* (7. 7-13).

This consists of three parts:

(1) an explanation, and (2) a proof, of the statement in verse 5 that "when we were in the flesh, the sinful passions, which were through the Law, wrought in our members to bring forth unto death." The explanation is in verses 7, 8: the Law is not sin, though he would not have known sin except through the Law, but sin, through the commandment, wrought evil desire within him.

(2) The proof is in verses 9 to 11: he found the

commandment to be the means of death, because sin, finding occasion through it, deceived and slew him.

(3) Two inferences are drawn from this, namely (a) that the Law is holy (verse 12) and (b) that the responsibility for the death produced lies with sin, the Law thereby serving to show the exceeding sinfulness of sin (verse 13).

Notes.—In verse 7 the R.V. has correctly "howbeit" instead of the A.V. "nay," for, after denying that the Law is sin, Paul states that nevertheless had it not been for the Law he would never have known sin.

The word "occasion" in verses 8 and 11 was frequently used to denote a base of operations in war. So here the commandment provided sin with a base of operations for an attack upon the soul. The statement in verse 9, "I was alive without the law," does not signify that Paul had spiritual life, but that he had no conscience of transgression against the commandment. He imagined himself to be in the happy state of freedom from the effects of the Law, a fancied state of goodness. When the commandment came his imagined goodness disappeared, he became conscious of his sinfulness and realised that he was, after all, in death.

Verse 13 might be paraphrased thus: "Did then the Law, which is essentially good itself, become the means of death unto me? Far from it. It was sin that became the means of death, in order that sin's

character might be exposed, by using the Holy Law to work out death to me. The commandment, instead of being the instrument of death, was thus intended to reveal the exceeding sinfulness of sin."

In section (a) the relation of sin to the Law is set forth as follows:—

(1) The Law is not sin . . . (verse 7).
(2) Through the Law is the knowledge of sin . . . (verse 7).
(3) Sin found occasion through the commandment . . . (verses 8, 11).
(4) Apart from the Law sin is dead . . . (verse 8).
(5) Sin revived through the commandment . . . (verse 9).
(6) The commandment appointed unto life was found to be appointed unto death . . . (verse 10).
(7) Sin through the commandment brought death . . . (verse 11).
(8) The Law is holy, and the commandment holy, and righteous and good . . . (verse 12).
(9) The Law does not itself become death to the transgressor . . . (verse 13).
(10) Sin works death through the Law . . . (verse 13).
(11) Sin becomes exceeding sinful through the commandment . . . (verse 13).

(12) The Law is spiritual . . . (verse 14).

(b) *The inability of the Law to deliver from sin* (7. 14-25).

In continuing the confirmation of what he stated in the first six verses of this chapter, as to how we have been discharged from the Law, and more particularly the subject of the power of sin which he has described in verses 7-13, the Apostle speaks of his own experiences. This he does, not as in distinction from those of other believers, but as representing what is common to all. Again, his main subject is not that of the conflict between the old nature and the new; he is showing the impossibility of fulfilling the Law by self-effort and so escaping its condemnation. He gives these experiences as a warning that if the believer puts himself under the Law he will only find how fearful is the power of sin within him. It is not a case of Paul's speaking of himself as he was in his unregenerate condition, nor is he speaking of some particular phase in his Christian life. He is giving a vivid description of the character and energy of sin in relationship to the Law, so that he may lead up to a statement as to the power of Christ to deliver (verse 25), and the power of the Holy Spirit to enable the believer to mind the things of the spirit and to mortify the deeds of the body (8. 1-13).

This section consists of three parts: (a) Verses 14-17: here he shows his inability to keep himself from doing what he disapproves of; (b) Verses 18-20:

here he shows his inability to carry out that which he approves of: (c) Verses 21-25: finally, bringing his discussion to its appointed conclusion, he shows how deliverance from this condition is effected. We will now view these three sections somewhat in particular.

(a) *Verses* 14-17. In this section there are three subjects:—

(1) The Law.

(2) The man in bondage under the Law.

(3) Sin.

(1) The Law is "spiritual": that word sums up the three qualities—holy, righteous, good, in verse 12.

(2) The man in bondage under the Law finds himself carnal, a slave sold under sin. Verse 15 gives three proofs of this fact. Firstly, what he practises he knows not; that marks him as a slave. Secondly and thirdly, he practises not what he would and what he hates he practises; this marks the compulsory character of his slavery. Verse 16 gives the deduction from this, namely, that in all this he acknowledges the excellence of the Law.

(3) As to the third subject, the conclusion from what has been stated is that the real author of his sinful actions is the tyrannical master, sin.

(b) *Verses* 18-20. This section runs parallel to the preceding one. The same three subjects are presented:—

(1) The Law, which is here described as "that which is good" (verse 18).

(2) The man who is under it, who finds that in his flesh dwells nothing good. His will, which consents to the Law, does not enable him to keep it (verses 18, 19).

(3) Sin, which dwells within him; that is responsible for the trouble. Verse 20 is thus parallel to verse 17.

Section (a) and (b) present the two sides of his inability mentioned in the introductory paragraph above.

(c) *Verses* 20-25. In this section, in which he reaches the conclusion as to the means of his deliverance, he mentions three different laws, which will be found to correspond to the three subjects in each of the preceding sections (a) and (b).

(1) The Law of God (verse 22), in which He delights, after the inward man.

(2) The law of his mind (verse 23), that is, a principle by which he consents unto the Law of God that it is good. "The inward man," in verse 22 is practically the same thing as his mind, in this verse. The latter represents the former. "With the mind he serves the Law of God" (verse 25).

(3) An inward law, or principle, which is defined by the statement "to me who would do good, evil is present" (verse 21). That is the same thing as "the law in my members" (verse 23), and is further described as "the law of sin which is in my members." The law of sin is set in opposition to the Law of

God—two opposing masters, each having a law. That is why the Apostle speaks of the law of sin as "a different law," in verse 23; "with the flesh he serves the law of sin" (verse 25).

The three laws, then, in this last section correspond respectively to the three subjects in (a) and (b). These were: (1) the Law of God, (2) the man struggling under the Law, (3) sin. So in verses 21-25 there are (1) the Law of God, (2) the law of the mind, *i.e.*, of the man who intellectually consents to the Law of God, (3) the law of sin, a principle of evil, keeping the will captive.

The last two verses of the chapter vividly bring to a consummation the leading thought which the Apostle has been elaborating in the whole chapter, namely, the absolute distinction between being under the Law and being united to Christ. The cry of anguish in verse 24, literally, "Miserable man, I!" purposely prepares the way for the contrasting utterance of joyful deliverance in verse 25.

"This body of death" is, apparently, the physical body, the instrument of sin which produces death, a slave shackle by which sin brings him into death.

The phrase "through Jesus Christ our Lord," which expressed the note of triumphant deliverance, recalls the keynote of chapter 5 (see 5. 1, 11, 21 and introductory note). But it also leads up to the phrase "in Christ Jesus" in 8. 1, which correspondingly recalls the leading note of chapter 6 (see 6. 11 and 23, R.V.).

The deliverance will come when the Lord comes.

C. Chapter 8.

The New Life in Christ in Relation to the Spirit.

In this chapter the Apostle continues the central theme of his Epistle, regarding life in Christ. In chapter 5 he showed the basis of this life; in chapter 6 its practical effect Godward; in the seventh chapter the inability of the Law to effect the deliverance necessary for it. In chapter 8 he shows (a) the present power of this new life under the operation of the Spirit of God, and (b) the future issues, all exhibiting the effects of deliverance from the power of the Law through Jesus Christ our Lord. In thus setting forth the power of the indwelling Spirit of God in contrast to the inability of the Law, he teaches at the same time the eternal security of the believer.

The chapter may be divided as follows:—

(1) Life in Christ . . . (verses 1-11).

(2) Heirship with Christ . . . (verses 12-27). 28-39).

Again, we may divide it under double headings thus:—

(1) The Spirit, the means of life and the power for righteousness . . . (verses 1-11).

(2) The Spirit, the means of sonship and the proof of future glory . . . (verses 12-27).

(3) God the Justifier, the pledge of glory: the

love of Christ, the power for victory . . . (verses 28-39).

Each of these divisions contains two points of adverse contrast :—

(a) In contrast to the law of the Spirit of life are (1) the law of sin and death (verse 2), and (2) the flesh (verses 3-13).

(b) In contrast to the spirit of sonship and to future glory are (1) the spirit of bondage (verse 15), and (2) the groaning creation (verses 22, 23).

(c) In contrast to God the Justifier, and love of Christ, are (1) the accuser (verse 33), and hostile circumstances (verses 35-38).

There is, however, a fivefold division of the chapter, somewhat clearly marked off by the references to the glory which awaits us at the resurrection. In each section the Apostle leads our thoughts up to this point in a kind of climax.

(1) The first section ends with verse 11. The aspect of glory there presented is the resurrection of our mortal bodies (the word rendered "quicken" means "to make alive," not to reinvigorate; resurrection is the theme, not present reinvigoration).

(2) The second section ends with verse 17. The aspect of glory there is joint-heirship with Christ as the issue from present suffering with Him.

(3) The third section ends with verse 23. The aspect of glory there is the redemption of our bodies

and its issue in the deliverance of the groaning creation.

(4) The fourth section ends with verse 30. The aspect of glory there is the glorifying of believers by God in resurrection life as the consummation of His grace toward them.

(5) The fifth section closes with the assurance of our endless, indissoluble enjoyment of the love of God in Christ.

These five sections we may accordingly put under the following headings :—

(1) Resurrection glory based on the resurrection of Christ and the indwelling Spirit (verses 1-11).

(2) Resurrection glory in union with Christ, testified by the Spirit (verses 12-17).

(3) Resurrection glory, the consummation of adoption assured by the possession of the Spirit (verses 18-23).

(4) Resurrection glory, the fulfilment of the believer's hope and foreordaining grace (verses 24-30).

(5) God's love in Christ eternally secured to us (verses 31-39).

We will notice the contents of each section somewhat more in detail.

Section (5) 8. 1-11.

The Spirit the means of Life and the power for Righteousness.

(a) *The work of the Trinity* (8. 1-4).

The first verse really forms the close of chapter 7. In that chapter the Apostle spoke of the condemnatory effects of the Law in case of the man who struggles for freedom from it by his self-effort, and of the deliverance to be granted through Christ Jesus. He now further concludes the argument of that chapter by the statement that there is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus. This union with Christ recalls chapter 7. 4, which itself summed up the whole of chapter 6. We are to be given in chapter 8 a fuller view of what life in Christ involves.

In the A.V. the latter part of the first verse is wrongly inserted. The right position of that clause is at the end of verse 4. No conditions as to conduct are attached to justification. There is a new law for the new life. It is "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus," which sets free from the condemnatory law of sin and death (verse 2, cf. 7. 6).

But this new law brings with it a power to live righteously. Verse 3 shows how this has come about. The Law, "in that it was weak through the flesh," could not bring into liberty. This recalls chapter 7. 5-11. The Law having fulfilled its purpose in the period of the Old Covenant, God introduced an entirely new mode of dealing, sending forth His own Son to become an offering for sin. For this His Incarnation was preparatory, and in the offering of His body God condemned sin the flesh. "In the likeness

of flesh of sin" (see R.V. margin) Christ offered up Himself in sacrifice for sin. God had condemned sin by the Law, but the sinner was left in bondage. He also condemned sin in the sacrificial offering of His Son, but the sinner was thereby brought into life and liberty.

Life could never be given at the expense of God's righteousness. Grace had found a way for the sinner's sin to be condemned in the sinless Person of Christ on the Cross, and for the sinner to be pronounced guiltless, and set free from the law of sin and death.

Verse 2 explains how verse 1 is possible; verse 3 explains how verse 2 has become true.

Verses 1-3 contain four points of contrast which we may set out in parallels in the following way :—

(a) The justification of them that are in Christ Jesus (verse 1).

(a) The inability of the Law to effect this (verse 3).

(b) The power of the Spirit of Life (verse 2).

(b) The weakness of the Law through the flesh (verse 3).

(c) Life in Christ Jesus (verse 2).

(c) God sending His Son to die (verse 3).

(d) Freedom from the law of sin and death (verse 2).

(d) Condemnation of sin in the death of Christ (verse 3).

The mention of "no condemnation" in verse 1

governs the whole chapter. It is brought forward definitely again in verse 30, " whom He called, them He also justified," and in verse 33, " Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth," and, finally, it reaches its climax in the pronouncement of no separation from the love of God (verses 35-39).

Being set free from the Law on the ground of the death of Christ, the law of the Spirit of life in Christ enables us to fulfil the righteous requirements of the Law, for we walk now, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit (verse 4). These first four verses then set forth the work of the Trinity on our behalf.

(b) *Four contrasts* (8. 5-8).

From this point the Apostle distinguishes between the unregenerate, those who " walk after the flesh," and the regenerate, those who " walk after the spirit." This he does again by four contrasts as follows :—

(1) *A contrast in persons*: " They that are after the flesh," and " they that are after the spirit," verse 5.

(2) *A contrast in aims*: " The former mind the things of the flesh, the latter the things of the spirit," verse 5.

> The spirit in this verse would seem to be the renewed spirit of the believer, wrought upon and energised by the Holy Spirit.

(3) *A contrast in effects*: " The mind of the flesh is death; but the mind of the spirit is life and peace," verse 6.

Verse 7 describes this mind, or minding, of the flesh as enmity against God, and then explains how it is so: (a) as a matter of essential characteristic, it is not subject to the Law of God, and (b) as a matter of inherent nature, it cannot be subject to His Law; it is impossible to improve it into being subject to Him. The natural man, (a) neither receiveth the things of the Spirit, (b) nor can he know them, (1 Cor. 2. 14). "They that are in the flesh cannot please God" (verse 8). The two verses show, then, that to be subject to His Law is to please Him.

(4) *A contrast in conditions*: the unbeliever is "in the flesh"; the believer is "in the Spirit" (verse 9).

(c) *The effects of the indwelling of the Spirit* (8. 9-11).

This leads the Apostle to mention the fact of the indwelling Spirit of God in the believer. His "if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you" does not lay down a condition according to which the believer may be in the Spirit, it expresses what is a fact in the case of every believer; for, as we have seen, he is in this passage distinguishing between the regenerate and the unregenerate. "If any man hath not the Spirit of Christ," that is, the indwelling Spirit, "he is none of His."

Verses 9, 10, teach the truth of the Trinity in Unity, for the Holy Spirit is both the Spirit of God and the

Spirit of Christ. To have the Spirit of God dwelling in us is to have the Spirit of Christ, verse 9; and the indwelling of the Spirit is the indwelling of Christ, verse 10.

The first verse of the chapter speaks of *the believer as in Christ;* verses 9, 10, teach that *Christ is in the believer.* Cf. John 14. 20; 15. 5, and 1 John 3. 24.

In verses 9-11 three things follow from the indwelling of the Holy Spirit :—

(1) We are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit (verse 9).

(2) The body is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness (verse 10).

(3) God will quicken our mortal bodies in resurrection (verse 11).

In regard to verse 10, the body, the human frame, contains the seeds of decay and is mortal, *i.e.,* doomed to death in the ordinary course of events, on account of sin, cf. 5. 12, 14; the spirit, in contrast to the body, having been quickened at regeneration, is possessed of the inalienable principle of life, secured to it eternally; and this "because of righteousness," *i.e.,* because of the fact that righteousness is reckoned by God to the sinner who believes.

But what has already been secured to the spirit of the believer is also assured to him in the case of his mortal body, verse 11. This assurance is based upon two foundation facts: (1) the resurrection of Christ, (2) the indwelling of the Spirit of God, "He that

raised up Christ from the dead shall quicken also your mortal bodies because of (see margin) His Spirit that dwelleth in you."

In regard to verse 11—

(1) Note the position of the word "also." The spirit has been quickened (verse 10); the mortal body shall also be quickened.

(2) As to the quickening, the word in the original does not denote re-invigoration. The Apostle is not referring to the impartation of some special energy of life and power to our bodies in the present life, but to the effects of the Second Coming of Christ upon the bodies of the living saints, when that event takes place.

(3) The marginal reading "because of His Spirit" is to be regarded as correct. Scripture does not speak of the Holy Spirit as raising the dead. On the other hand, the transformation of the bodies of believers then living is assured to them both by the resurrection of Christ, and by the fact of the indwelling of the Spirit. Christ was the "firstfruits" in resurrection in order of event (1 Cor. 15. 20, 23); and the Holy Spirit is "the firstfruits" as the pledge of the fulfilment of the believer's hope (see verses 23-25 below).

Verses 10 and 11 recall 7. 24. The body is doomed to death because it is the instrument of sin, and so it is " the body of this death," yet a future resurrection glory is assured to it " through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Section (6) 8. 12-27.

The Spirit the Means of Sonship and the Proof of Coming Glory.

In the first section (verses 1-11) the Apostle spoke of the indwelling of the Spirit of God. Now, carrying that subject further, he points out the operation of the Spirit within us, and this in a twofold way: (a) firstly, as to the leading of the Spirit, and the effects of our response thereto (verses 12-14); (b) secondly, as to the inward witness which the Spirit gives with our spirits that we are children of God, and the results of this, issuing in our being glorified with Christ (verses 15-17). Again, in the first section the distinction was made between unbelievers, who have not the Spirit of Christ and cannot please God, and believers, who are possessed of the Spirit and are thereby assured of resurrection glory. In the second section, while that distinction is maintained, the sonship of the believer is emphasised. In the former section it was a question of possessing the Spirit or being without Him; the point of this next section is the evidence of sonship in being led by the Spirit, and the inward witness given by Him.

We will notice these lines of thought a little more fully.

(a) *The witness of the Spirit* (8. 12-17).

Verse 12 gives a deduction drawn from the preceding section. That is to say, we are debtors not to the flesh to live after the flesh, firstly because of the character and the tendency of the flesh (verses 6-8), secondly because of the fact that the indwelling of the Spirit (verses 9, 10), thirdly because of the resurrection life which is secured to the believer (verse 11).

In verse 13 we might have expected the Apostle to give the positive side to verse 12 and to say that we are debtors to live after the Spirit. He breaks off the statement of verse 12, however, only to put the conclusion in a more striking way. We should note the change from the first personal pronoun "we," in verse 12, to the second personal pronoun "ye." This 13th verse states a general principle and includes those mentioned in verses 5 and 6 who are after the flesh and mind the things of the flesh. Those who are after the Spirit mortify through His power the deeds of the body, and so apprehend practically what it is to live, *i.e.*, to experience the blessedness of life under the Spirit's power.

The remainder of this section is a confirmation of the last clause of verse 13. The life of which the Apostle speaks consists in being led by the Spirit of God, and all who are so led are the sons of God. They express in their conduct the character involved

in the relationship. The word "sons" is emphatic. The Apostle does not say "children of God," for in this verse he is not speaking of the new birth, but of the evidences of Divine relationship. The controlling power of the Spirit leads us to exhibit a likeness to our Father in heaven. Compare Matt. 5. 9 and 45, in each of which the R.V. correctly renders by "sons" instead of "children." Verse 14 may be linked with verse 4; being led by the Spirit of God is practically the same thing as walking after the Spirit.

Verse 15 is an appeal to the experience of his readers in regard to: —

(1) The character of the Spirit which they received;

(2) The effect of the reception,

as proof of what was stated in verse 14, namely, that those who mortify the deeds of the body, and thereby show that they are led by the Spirit of God, are sons of God.

(1) As to the character, they did not receive the spirit of bondage, productive of fear, as with those who are under the Law, but the spirit of adoption, or sonship, productive of the feelings and experiences of sons. The mention of bondage and fear is reminiscent of chapter 7, verses 7-25.

(2) As to the effect, the spirit of adoption leads us to cry, "Abba, Father." "Abba" is the infant's cry, suggestive of unreasoning helplessness; "Father" is

the utterance of filial confidence and trust, suggestive of realised relationship.

The 16th verse expands the thought of the 15th. The cry "Abba, Father," is inspired by something more than the natural cry; for the natural cry is the outcome merely of natural experience, but the cry "Abba, Father," while it is the utterance of our own spirit, is at the same time produced in us by the Spirit of God. Thus the Spirit of God bears joint witness with our spirit that we are children of God. This verse provides Scriptural ground for the assurance of salvation on the part of believers.

Verse 17 brings us to the issue of the argument of the section up to this point, beginning with the statement, "Ye shall live." Here he shows that since we are children, the inheritance God has for us as our Father is secured to us; we are heirs of God. But more, to be an heir of God is to be a joint-heir with Christ, for all that the Father has belongs to the Son (John 17. 10, R.V.). Whatever we have therefore as children of God is shared with us by Christ. The words "joint-heirs with Christ" should not be taken merely in connection with the following clause, "if so be that we suffer with Him," as if our being joint-heirs with Christ was conditional upon our suffering with Him here. The word in the original, rendered "if so be," indicates that to suffer with Christ is characteristic of believers generally. Suffering for Christ, and therefore with Him, is a hall-

mark of the believer in this life. True Christianity is, in one way or another, inevitably a suffering quantity in this world. The Apostle is not here speaking about the rewards hereafter to be given for the endurance of sufferings in this life; he is setting forth what is to be the eternal portion of those who are in Christ, as distinct from those who walk after the flesh and do not belong to Christ. The sufferings of Christians arise from the same cause as the sufferings of Christ in the days of His flesh, namely, the hatred of the world to God, and therefore believers are associated with Christ in this respect; but God has designed that present suffering shall issue in future glory. Gal. 3. 29, and 3. 7, should be compared with this passage. See also 1 Pet. 4. 13.

The 17th verse, ending the second section, brings us then again to the subject of the glory we are to enjoy hereafter. In verse 11 the point reached was the resurrection of our bodies; in the 17th verse our thoughts are carried further, to the fact of being glorified with Christ. The argument of this section is that believers, as those who are debtors not to live after the flesh, but who are to mortify the deeds of the body, enjoy a life of spiritual blessedness here, which, though involving suffering, will lead to an eternal life of glory with Christ; and the proof is, firstly, they are led by the Spirit of God which shows that they are sons of God; secondly, that they have received the Spirit of adoption, leading them to cry,

"Abba, Father"; thirdly, that they have the inward testimony of the Spirit that they are God's children, which involves joint heirship with Christ, a union to be consummated in glory hereafter.

(b) *Present suffering preliminary to glory* (8. 18-27).

In the first section, verses 1-11, those who are in Christ Jesus were contrasted with those who walk after the flesh. The former are indwelt by the Spirit of God. The latter have not the Spirit. In the case of believers the indwelling Spirit is a guarantee of the transformation of their bodies hereafter.

In the second section, verses 12-17, from the contrast already referred to between believers and unbelievers, the Apostle showed the necessity for the latter to mortify the deeds of the body and so to give evidence of Divine sonship. That led him to speak of what sonship involved. Children of God are heirs of God, and therefore heirs with Christ. But that, again, involves present suffering, which nevertheless will issue in glory with Christ.

Now in the third section he proceeds from the contrast between suffering and glory (verse 17), expanding these subjects, and thereby providing a proof that sufferings now experienced are only antecedent to coming glory. He enlarges upon the subject of suffering, by including the groans and sorrows of the whole creation, experiences in which the children of God share. He enlarges upon the subject of glory by showing that in the midst of its groanings the whole

creation, expectant of future deliverance, is waiting for the revealing of the sons of God, which will bring deliverance. The revealing of the sons of God is contingent upon the redemption of their bodies.

Comparing these three sections again with reference to the Spirit of God, in the first section the presence of the Holy Spirit in believers is, as we have noted above, the assurance of the future transformation (verse 11). In the second section the Holy Spirit is spoken of as bearing witness with their spirits that, being children of God, they are assured of glory (verses 16, 17). In the third section the Spirit is shown to be the Firstfruits of all that is to be the portion of believers hereafter (verse 23).

The Apostle's argument is continued still by way of contrast, as follows :—

(a) The sufferings of this present time
and
the glory which shall be revealed to us-ward (verse 18).

(b) The bondage of corruption
and
the liberty of the glory of the children of God (verse 21).

(c) The groanings of believers
and
the redemption of their bodies (verse 23).

To notice this section a little more closely, verse 18 takes up the subject of suffering and glory mentioned

in verse 17. There the suffering was seen to be prior to the glory; in verse 18 the two are contrasted so as to show that the suffering is comparatively insignificant, considering the glory. The eighteenth verse is introductory to the remainder of the section, which shows how the revelation of the glory "to us-ward" will affect creation.

Verse 19 thus begins a proof of the Apostle's estimate that present sufferings are not worthy to be compared with future glory. The creation stands here for all things animate and inanimate, and the whole is vividly described as in a condition of earnest expectation of the revealing of the sons of God. The word rendered "earnest expectation" literally denotes "waiting with head outstretched" and suggests the thought of concentration combined with desire. The personification of nature, viewed as rejoicing in Divine blessing, may be illustrated by such passages as Ps. 69. 34; 148. 1-10; Isa. 44. 23; 49. 13; 55. 12.

Verse 20 gives three reasons why the creation waits for the revealing of the sons of God:—

(1) It is now subjected to vanity.

(2) The subjection is not voluntary, but Divinely imposed.

(3) It is not final, but will issue in deliverance.

Two words in verses 20 and 21 describe the present condition of creation — (1) vanity; (2) corruption. The latter expresses the former more vividly. The word rendered "vanity" suggests a failure to realise

aim and effort. In the case of creation this involves "the bondage of corruption." Amidst all this the creation is possessed of hope "that it shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God" (R.V.). Verse 21 thus defines the hope mentioned in verse 20. The closing phrase of the twenty-first verse, "the liberty of the glory of the children of God," expands the phrase at the end of verse 19, "the revealing of the sons of God." The two phrases "the bondage of corruption" and "the liberty of the glory" are antithetic. "Liberty" is set in contrast to "bondage," and "glory" to "corruption." Liberty will be a characteristic of the glory. Instead of failure to realise the aim of one's being, there will be full scope for the exercise of the powers imparted by God.

The change from "sons of God" (verse 19) to "children of God" is significant. The former was appropriate to the thought of manifestation in glory, for then the saints will, as sons of God, fully represent their Father's character and display His power. The phrase "children of God" recalls the thought of adoption and heirship in verses 15-17, and is appropriate to the mention of "the liberty of the glory."

Verses 22 and 23 confirm the preceding statements regarding suffering and glory, and define them more closely. The suffering of creation is described as groaning and travailing in pain. In this groaning

believers share, for they are not yet freed from the effects of the Fall, even though they are possessed of the Spirit. The Spirit is the firstfruits of their full inheritance, which will be their portion when their bodies are redeemed. That will consummate their adoption.

Adoption as sons of God involves (1) relationship, (2) holiness, (3) glory; (1) and (2) are intimated in verses 14 and 15, (3) in verse 23. There the phrase "the redemption of our body" defines "adoption"; it indicates the consummation of all that adoption signifies.

What follows is based upon the view of coming glory given in verse 23, relating to the redemption of our body, the third phase of the subject in this chapter. The section begins with the theme of our hope, as directed to the glory, and closes with a statement of its consummation, in which the Apostle rehearses God's counsels and ways of grace towards us from the past eternity to their culmination at the Rapture. As with the preceding parts of the chapter, this one contains a special detail of the operations of the Spirit of God in the believer. Here it is the intercession of the Spirit. Reviewing the various facts in this connection, we have the following:—

In section (1) *the indwelling* of the Spirit as the antecedent to future glory (verses 9-11).

In section (2) *the witness* of the Spirit as the assurance of future glory (verses 16, 17).

In section (3) *the possession* of the Spirit as the firstfruits of future glory (verse 23).

In section (4) *the intercession* of the Spirit as our assistance in anticipation of future glory (verses 24-30).

Verse 24 shows how it comes about that amidst adverse circumstances we are anticipating the redemption of our body. "For by hope were we saved:"—not, of course, that hope was the instrument of our salvation, but that it was an essential feature associated with it. The subject of the hope is the redemption of our body. The realisation is to come—"Hope that is seen is not hope." Realisation removes expectation—"who hopeth for that which he seeth?" In this clause the word "hope" denotes a confident expectation of its fulfilment.

Verses 25, 26. Since the good thing secured to us is as yet absent, the anticipation is to be characterised by patience. Now patience suggests the existence of adverse circumstances which demand its exercise, and in all this we have One who is ever ready to assist us. Here then the Apostle reintroduces the subject of the work of the Spirit of God within us. "In like manner the Spirit also helpeth our infirmity." (Not "infirmities," as in the A.V., but a general condition of weakness.) "In like manner," for we are sustained indeed by hope, but that alone could not meet our need; we have another and greater source of help for the weakness that accompanies our anticipation of

redemption. Apart from the Spirit's aid, patience would fail, and we should succumb to despair.

The word rendered "helpeth" denotes, literally, to take hold of anything with another, and so means to give assistance by sharing a burden. Creation groans, we groan, and the Spirit groans; but the Spirit groans within us, and in doing so strengthens us to bear our burdens with confidence and courage, and directs our hearts to God.

Groaning is not mere moaning. Groaning suggests the idea of an appeal in the time of need. How then to address our appeal, how to pray, here lies our infirmity. "We know not how to pray as we ought." A more literal rendering would be, "What we are to pray according to the need we know not," that is to say, we do not know how to express ourselves, so that our prayer shall correspond to the need. We have then the assistance of Him of whom the Lord Jesus spoke as "another Comforter," another Advocate, one of like character with Himself. What we cannot do the Spirit does within us, inspiring our yearnings and through our groanings—groanings which do not find expression in actual speech, but which are effective with God. Human language is, it would seem, not essential to Divine intercession.

Verse 27 gives a proof of the effectiveness of the Spirit's intercession in us. God, who searcheth the hearts, "knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because [or possibly, as in the margin, "that"] He

maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God "—literally " according to God " (cf., for example, 2 Cor. 7. 9, lit. " sorry according to God "). Here the phrase " according to God " has the position of emphasis. Since the Spirit's groanings are in accordance with God's mind, His intercessions in our groanings are consistent with God's dealings with us, and the fulfilment of His purpose towards us. In this way verse 27 leads on to verses 28 to 30. God, who knows the unexpressed desires of our hearts, and knows the mind of the Holy Spirit whom He has sent to dwell in our hearts, both undertakes for us in every circumstance of our life, and will assuredly carry out all that He has determined for us.

Section (7) 8. 28-39.

God the Justifier the Pledge of Glory, and the Love of Christ the Power for Victory.

(a) *The purposes of God in Christ* (8. 28-30).

Verse 28. So far Paul has shown that suffering is not incompatible with a life of hope. He now shows that suffering is part of the working-out of God's all-wise purposes for us. " We know that to them that love God all things work together [or it may be rendered " He worketh all things together "] for good, even to them that are called according to His purpose." " All things," while including circumstances of prosperity, has special reference to those of adversity.

This is the only place in the Epistle where our love

to God is mentioned. Everywhere else the Apostle speaks of God's love to us. The phrase "them that love God" is descriptive of believers as a class, and at the same time suggests that only those who love God realise that all things work together for their good. Those who love God are necessarily those who are called according to His purpose. The two descriptions—"them that are called" and "them that love God"—are to one another as cause and effect. The call (always in the Epistles an effectual call) produces the response of love to Him who calls. But more, the call itself involves this, that "all things work together for good." Troubles do not hinder Christian progress, they only further the designs of God's grace.

This section contains five facts intended as means of comfort for the believer:—

(1) The help of the Spirit in our infirmity (verse 26).

(2) The intercession of the Spirit (verse 26).

(3) The knowledge of God in relation to this (verse 27).

(4) The beneficence of God in arranging all things for our good (verse 28).

(5) The purposes of God toward us, and the certainty of their accomplishment (verses 29, 30).

Verses 29 and 30 confirm verse 28, giving the ground of the certainty that all things work together for good. The confirmation is given in an unfolding of the Divine purposes of grace in the complete salva-

tion of believers. The whole scheme rests upon the foreknowledge of God; "whom He foreknew He also foreordained." It is only consistent with His foreknowledge that He should foreordain certain things. Again, the Divine foreknowledge carries with it a Divine will to accomplish certain designs toward those who were foreordained. God's foreknowledge foresaw certain persons in whom He would fulfil His counsels of grace; His foreordaining decree determined exactly what He would do for them. "Whom He foreknew He also foreordained to be conformed to the image of His Son."

The 30th verse shows how that conformity is to be accomplished. The steps that God takes to bring it about are given, but before enumerating these the Apostle mentions the far higher purposes of God toward His Son. Christ is the supreme object of the counsels of God, the goal of all His arrangements and actions in the history of the universe. The whole plan of the complete salvation of believers has His glory as its design. "All things have been created unto Him" (Col. 1. 16). If believers have been foreordained to be conformed to His image, it is that He may be "the Firstborn among many brethren." In that way the Only-Begotten Son becomes the Firstborn. The Divine determination to glorify Him carries with it the salvation of believers. Their certainty of coming glory is due to the certainty that God will fulfil His purposes towards His Son, and that their con-

formity to Him will enhance His glory in the highest possible manner. In being glorified with Him they will show forth His glory to a degree impossible by any other means.

Verse 30, then, declares the successive stages which culminate in the attainment of the Divine plans in salvation. Here we have the counsels of God carried into action. His foreknowledge determines His plan; His plan is carried into effect. It is brought to its consummation in the following three steps: "Whom He foreordained them He also called; and whom He called them He also justified, and whom He justified them He also glorified." The foreordaining counsels were eternal; their realisation takes place in time. The past tense used in each of the clauses does not indicate past history, but signifies the completeness and certainty of each act.

This verse gives the last and most comprehensive of the four great views of glory in this chapter. Here it presents not only the quickening of the mortal body at the time of the Rapture (verse 11), nor merely our being glorified with Christ (verse 17), nor again the redemption of the body (verse 23), but highest of all, and embracing all that has preceded, our entire conformity to the image of the Son of God, that He may have His pre-eminent and rightful place, and that we may eternally and perfectly show forth His character and power.

(b) *The justifying grace and the love of God in Christ* (8. 31-39).

In this section of the chapter the Apostle (a) states his conclusions from the argument he has just completed, and (b) brings to a close the whole subject of the first half of the Epistle.

As to (a) verses 2 to 30 consisted of a proof of the opening statement of the chapter, that "there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus," itself a deduction from the argument of chapter 7. Verses 31 to 39 form a confirmation of that initial statement, and declare both the impossibility of the believer's condemnation and therefore also the impossibility of his separation from the love of God in Christ. Freedom from condemnation is the negative side; assurance of God's love is the positive.

At the beginning of the chapter Paul safeguards these assurances against antinomian carnality by making clear that the law of the spirit of life, which has freed us from the condemnation of the law of sin and death, involves our pleasing God, mortifying the deeds of the body and living in righteousness, through the power of the indwelling Spirit. He then points out that this possession of the Spirit carries with it the assurance of the accomplishment of all God's purposes of grace towards His children. Accordingly now in closing he develops both the negative and the positive sides, first expanding the subject of freedom from condemnation (verses 31 to 34), and then showing

that all the plans and dealings of Divine grace are the manifestation of God's love, from which we can never be separated (verses 35 to 39). Thus the two parts of this last section correspond broadly to the two leading subjects dealt with in the first thirty verses. Here in the final section the main theme of the chapter, namely, the eternal security of the believer, is brought to a head.

As to (b), it is interesting to see how verses 31 to 39 sum up point by point, in a *résumé*, the argument of the Epistle hitherto.

(1) The Apostle has shown that, whereas we were all under sin and could not obtain justification by the Law (1. 18 to 3. 20), God provided a means of justification through the death of Christ (3. 21 to 4. 25). This he now recalls in his statement that God "spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all" (8. 32).

(2) Next he pointed out the consequences of our justification, showing in chapters 5 and 6 respectively what we have through Christ and what we are in Christ. This he now sums up in the challenging question, "How shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" (verse 32).

(3) In chapter 7, he dwelt at length upon the condemnatory power of the Law and led up from this to the fact that the law of the Spirit of life in Christ has freed us from condemnation. This he now enforces in the two questions, "Who shall lay anything

to the charge of God's elect?" and "Who is he that condemneth?" (verses 33, 34).

(4) Again, at the beginning of chapter 8, he pointed out, as he had done at 3. 25, the relationship of the resurrection of Christ to our justification, leading on from Christ's resurrection to the intercession of the Spirit (8. 11, 26); so, too, he now lays emphasis upon the facts that Christ rose from the dead and that He makes intercession for us (verse 34).

(5) Further, he had spoken of present sufferings, but had shown that these were not worthy to be compared with the glory that will follow (verses 18-30); this is now all gathered up in the closing verses, 35-39, where he declares that no form of present suffering, nor indeed any creature, can separate us from the love of Christ.

The parallelisms between chapters 5 and 6 and chapter 8 are noticeable. Several subjects mentioned in the two earlier chapters are brought before us in chapter 8, though in a fuller way, consequent upon the intervening development of the Apostle's argument:—

(a) The fifth chapter began with the subject of *peace with God* as that which is to be enjoyed through justification by faith (5. 1); in the eighth chapter peace is seen to be enjoyed through the minding of the Spirit, the practical outcome of freedom from condemnation (8. 6).

(b) In chapter 5 our joyful *hope of the glory of God* was shown to be the outcome of justification by faith (verse 2) and to be stimulated by patience and probation in the midst of tribulation (5. 2-4); so in chapter 8 the Apostle speaks of our hope of the liberty of the glory of the sons of God (8. 20, 21), and here, too, patience goes with hope (verse 25); only here in the eighth chapter hope is seen to be stimulated by the Spirit of God within us (verses 23-27).

(c) In chapter 5 *the glory of God* was simply mentioned as the object of our hope (verse 2); in chapter 8 the glory is still so presented, but the subject is now developed and elaborated, and forms one of the main features of the chapter.

(d) Chapter 5 speaks of *the love of God* as shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit (verse 5); in chapter 8 the theme of the love of God is expanded so as to show in what respect it is exhibited toward us and how it is impossible for us to be separated from it (verses 28-39).

(e) In the fifth chapter *the death of Christ* was spoken of as having been suffered for the ungodly; "we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son" (verses 6, 8, 10); in chapter 8, in each verse where this subject is mentioned He is spoken of as "His own Son," in whose Person God, at the Cross, condemned sin in the flesh (8, 3); "He spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all" (verse 32).

Here then again in chapter 8 the details are fuller and the language more expressive.

(f) Chapter 5 spoke of our *reconciliation to God,* but no mention was made of our Divine sonship; chapter 8 carries us farther than reconciliation, and shows how by adoption we are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ (verses 14-16).

(g) Chapter 5 dealt with the subjects of *sin and death,* showing how death reigned and sin abounded; there, too, in contrast to these, *righteousness and life* were shown to be the outcome of the death of Christ (verses 12-21), and the grace of God was also set in contrast to the power of the Law (verses 20, 21). So chapter 8 takes up the subject of sin and death, and the effects of the Law in relationship thereto, setting in contrast the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, which works in us as an outcome of His death under the judgment of God, and enables us to fulfil the righteous ordinance of the Law (verses 2-4). Again, our bodies are death-doomed on account of sin, but the life we have received of God in Christ will extend even to these. The subject of life, too, is extended: it is not merely spoken of as eternal life in contrast to spiritual death as in chapter 5, it is regarded in its potentialities both present and future (verses 6, 10, 13).

(h) The fifth chapter mentioned *a sequence of steps in Divine grace* in that being justified and reconciled we shall be saved from the wrath of God through

Christ (verses 9, 10). This sequence is developed in chapter 8, the extended form being consequent upon the fact that in this chapter the subject of reconciliation to God has been replaced by that of relationship with God. Here the sequence is that those whom God foreknew and ordained He called, and whom He called He justified, and whom He justified them He glorified.

(i) Chapter 6 spoke of our *life in Christ*: having been united to Him, we are become servants of righteousness and are to present our members as instruments of righteousness unto God; in chapter 8 this new life in Christ is similarly viewed in its practical outcome of righteousness in conduct and walk (verses 2, 4), but now we are shown that the Holy Spirit within us is the power for it. Instead, therefore, of speaking of walking in newness of life, the Apostle now speaks of walking after the Spirit (verse 4).

(j) Chapter 6 dealt with the subject of *death to sin*: we were exhorted to reckon ourselves to be dead unto it (verse 11), and not to let sin reign in our mortal body (11, 12); in chapter 8 we are exhorted to put to death the deeds of the body by the power of the Spirit of God.

(k) In chapter 6 the new life in Christ was shown to be a *life unto God* (verses 11, 13, 22); in chapter 8 the thought of living to God is replaced by that of love to God (verse 28).

(1) Chapter 6 spoke of *eternal life*; in chapter 8 this becomes eternal love. Chapter 6 closes with the statement that we have "eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord": life is eternally secured to us because we are in Him. The close of chapter 8 states that the love of God is "in Christ Jesus our Lord"; since, therefore, we are in Christ we can never be separated from His love.

We will now review this final section of chapter 8 more in detail. Three facts stand out therein, the whole being covered by the statement in verse 31 that "God is for us." Since this is so:—

(1) God will give us all things.

(2) No charge can be brought against us.

(3) The love of Christ is our inalienable portion.

In verse 31 the statement that God is for us is a direct conclusion from what the Apostle has just mentioned in verses 28-30. If all things work together for good and God has determined to glorify us as those whom He has called and justified, He must be for us, and if so, no one can be against us. That is to say, no one can prevail so as to hinder the fulfilment of God's purposes toward us.

Verse 32 contains a further proof of this from the fact of the means which God has adopted to secure these things for us. Since He spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, He will also with Him freely give us all things. The greater includes the less.

Verses 33 to 35 contain metaphors from a Court of Justice. In the case of the prisoner at the bar there are :—

(1) The Accuser.

(2) The Judge.

(3) The Executioner.

The Apostle shows that none of these three has place with regard to the believer before God :—

(1) "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?"—there can be no accuser, for God justifies.

(2) "Who is He that shall condemn?"—there is no judge, for Christ has died.

The marginal reading is possibly the right one here, "Shall Christ Jesus who died, yea rather, who was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us?" He it is into whose hands all judgment is given, but then by His death He has secured our justification, and in His resurrection life and intercession for us He is altogether for us.

(3) Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?"—there can be no executioner.

To be separated from His love is death. Nothing can accomplish this, "neither tribulation, nor anguish, nor persecution, nor famine, nor nakedness, nor sword"—a sevenfold array of adversaries, all of which were experienced by the

Apostle, and which in one respect or another have been the common lot of believers in the present age.

Verse 36 provides a striking example of the new character and increased force attaching to New Testament quotations from the Old. The words, "For Thy sake we are killed all the day long," are taken from Ps. 44. 22. There the note is one of mourning, here it is a note of triumph. The Death and Resurrection of Christ have made the difference. What an increased significance lies in the words "For Thy sake"! There is no discrepancy between the Old and the New, but the Apostle is now able to add, "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us." As Chrysostom says, "This is a new order of victory, to conquer by means of our adversaries." We are more than conquerors, because, not only are our adversaries deprived of power to snap the tie of the love of Christ, but their opposition is turned to our account, enhancing the power of our victory through Christ.

Verses 38 and 39 give the concluding confirmation of what has preceded. The order given in the R.V., which is undoubtedly correct, places the various objects in alternating groups according as they are impersonal or personal, the word "creature" at the end embracing the whole. The arrangement accordingly is:—

(a) neither death nor life (impersonal);
(b) nor angels nor principalities (personal).

(a) nor things present nor things to come (impersonal).
(b) nor powers (personal).

(a) nor height nor depth (impersonal);
(b) nor any other creature (personal).

The closing words of the chapter, "the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord," form the crowning arch of the whole edifice of the Epistle. Here the Apostle brings us to the highest height of Divine truth. The comprehensiveness of the Gospel is condensed into this one phrase.

DIVISION IV.

THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD IN HIS WAYS WITH ISRAEL AND THE GENTILES.

CHAPTERS 9-11.

THE ninth chapter introduces a new section of the Epistle. The Apostle is, however, still continuing his great subject of the vindication of God's character and ways. He has shown in the first eight chapters that God is righteous in the exercise both of His wrath and of His grace. He now proceeds to establish the righteousness of God in His dealings nationally with Jews and Gentiles. Chapters 9 to 11 run parallel to chapters 3 to 8. We find a very striking harmony between the development of his theme in the ninth chapter and the argument of the third chapter. Again, the tenth follows on with the subject of faith, just as the fourth chapter did the third. Further, in the eleventh chapter the subject of God's grace and mercy through Christ corresponds to those of chapters 5 to 8. The themes are the same, the setting is different.

The chief subject of chapter 9 is *the sovereignty of God.* That of chapter 10 is *the possibilities of faith.* That of chapter 11 is *God's grace and mercy.* In each case the subject has to do with Jews and Gentiles.

CHAPTER IX.

God's sovereignty is established first. He is a law to Himself. He gives no account of His matters. But the whole section of the three chapters beautifully shows that His sovereignty is exercised specially in longsuffering and grace.

The Apostle has, from chapter 1, verse 18, to the end of chapter 8, given a closely reasoned argument based upon his statements in 1. 16, 17, that in the Gospel a righteousness of God is revealed by faith unto faith, and that the just shall live by faith. He has thereby fully established the great truth of justification by faith. He is now going to apply it to the dark and difficult problem of the rejection of the Gospel by the vast majority of the Jewish nation, and to show how entirely consistent the doctrine is with this spiritual state of the Jews. He therefore, in these three chapters 9 to 11, establishes the doctrine further. In other words, these chapters form an appendix to his completed argument. They are developed from another point of view and so give further confirmation to what he has stated in the introduction.

He seeks to explain the present spiritually dark position of his nation as a whole, and opens up the prospect of restoration. He shows that Divine retribution is not merely arbitrary, but is consequent upon man's own hardness of heart. The sovereignty of God has not been exercised by way of predestinating men to sin, as if they were helpless machines forced on by a predetermined fate, and compelled thereby to reap

the consequences of an evil for which they were not primarily responsible. Of this the Apostle will give a special instance. In chapter 9 his main object will be to show that the present condition of the Jews is chargeable, not to God, but to themselves.

Section (1) Chapter 9.

The Sovereignty of God.

Chapter 9 may be divided into six sections, as follows :—

(a) *Paul's sorrow for the present condition of Israel* (verses 1-5).

(b) *God's sovereignty in election—His word has not failed* (verses 6-13).

(c) *God's sovereignty stated and illustrated in the Old Testament—His righteousness is established* (verses 14-18).

(d) *God's sovereignty unchallengeable—He has shown long-suffering and mercy* (verses 19-24).

(e) *God's sovereignty in relation to Israel and the Gentiles foretold in the Old Testament —Israel temporarily rejected, Gentiles accepted* (verses 25-29).

(f) *The problem explained—faith provides the key to the situation* (verses 30-33).

(a) *Paul's sorrow for Israel* (9. 1-5).

We should observe the parallelism between chapter 9 and the first part of chapter 3. In the third chapter

three questions were asked which represent supposed Jewish objections raised against the teaching that Jew and Gentile were on the same ground before God in the matters of sin and justification by faith.

The first objection in chapter 3 was that such an equalisation would deny the distinctive privileges of the Jew. The question, "What advantage hath then the Jew, or what is the profit of circumcision?" (3. 1) was answered in 3. 2. So now in chapter 9 he first shows, more fully than in 3. 2, what are the distinctive privileges of the nation (verses 4, 5).

The second objection in chapter 3 was that the validity of God's promises would be destroyed. Would not the faithfulness of God be made of none effect (3. 3)? That was answered in 3. 4. Similarly in chapter 9 the Apostle shows that the unbelief of Israel does not mean that the Word of God is come to naught (verses 6-13).

The third objection in chapter 3 was that there would be unrighteousness with God (3. 5). That was answered in 3. 6 to 8. This third objection is taken up in chapter 9 in verse 14, where the question is asked, "Is there unrighteousness with God?" The answer is given in verses 14 to 33.

It would seem, from the strong way in which Paul speaks at the beginning of this chapter, as if his Jewish opponents had charged him with actual hostility to his nation and insincerity in his methods. He

therefore declares firstly that he speaks the truth in Christ. His fellowship with Christ makes insincerity impossible. Secondly, that his conscience bore witness with him, a conscience enlightened and guided by the Holy Spirit (verse 1). His sorrow was so great that he could wish himself "anathema from Christ" for his brethren's sake. The word "anathema," used thus, is said of that which is devoted to God for destruction—not in the sense of annihilation, but in separation from God as being under His curse. We may compare what is said of Moses in Ex. 32. 32. Certainly the desire was impossible of accomplishment; Paul himself had just stated that nothing could separate the believer from the love of Christ (8. 35). He does not actually say that he wished it, but that he could wish it, that is, if it were possible legitimately to entertain the idea. What he means is that he would be willing to suffer even the utmost on their behalf.

He next enumerates nine privileges belonging to his "kinsmen according to the flesh": (1) they are Israelites, descendants of him who was "a prince with God"; (2) theirs is the adoption, that is, sonship. God had spoken of Israel as "His son, even His firstborn" (Exod. 4. 22); (3) the glory, the manifestation of the presence of God in their midst; (4) the Covenants, *i.e.*, the Covenants of promise which God had made with the patriarchs (Eph. 2. 12); (5) the giving of the Law; (6) the service of God, that is, the

service relating to the Tabernacle and Temple; (7) the promises—those given to Abraham and his seed (Gal. 3. 16); (8) the fathers, *i.e.*, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Acts 3. 13; 7. 32; and see 2 Cor. 11. 22); (9) greatest of all, that from the nation of Israel, "is Christ as concerning the flesh, who is over all, God blessed for ever." In His Incarnation He sprang from their race.

(b) *God's sovereignty in election.* . . . His ***word established*** (9. 6-13).

In this section the Apostle meets an objection that his teaching as to the rejection of the Jews would argue a failure on God's part to fulfil His promises. This is the first step towards his argument as to the righteousness of God in calling the Gentiles into blessing.

Firstly, then, he shows that not Abraham's natural descendants but his spiritual seed were the subjects of God's promises to him, and that God had a perfect right to choose. Moreover His choice had a reasonable basis.

The following are the steps in the argument :—

(1) The subjects of the promise (verse 6).

(2) The character of the promise (verses 7-9).

(3) The basis of the promise (verses 10-13).

(1) *The subjects of the promise* (verse 6). The word of God has not come to naught; for "they are not all Israel which are of Israel." That is, the number of those who are of Israel is not determined

by natural descent. We may compare what the Apostle has already said in chapter 2. 28, 29. We have seen that the object of his argument in this chapter is to show that God had purposed to bring Gentiles into His favour. In the next few verses he speaks of the setting aside of some of the natural descendants of Abraham, and again of some of Isaac's and the selection of others.

(2) *The character of the promise* (verses 7-9). The promise was not conditional upon national birth. God's choice was made according to His own will, as is seen in the case of Ishmael and Isaac. Ishmael was set aside—" in Isaac shall thy seed be called." So that not all the descendants of Abraham are spiritual children (verse 7). It is not the " children of the flesh that are the children of God," " the children of the promise are reckoned for a seed " (verse 8). Abraham and Sarah planned according to the flesh, and thus sought to hurry the fulfilment of God's promise, with disastrous consequences. The choice made by God depended, not upon the works of the flesh, but on His own promise and on His spiritual power (verse 9). All Abraham's spiritual children are begotten by God's word of promise (cf. Gal. 4. 28). The Jew could not therefore claim the blessings of God's covenant on the ground that they were promised to Abraham's natural children.

(3) *The basis of the promise* (verses 10-13). The basis was simply God's own sovereign will. This is

shown in the parallel instance in the case of the children of Isaac and Rebecca. The Jew might so far reply that of course Ishmael and his descendants were to be rejected, because he was the son of a bondwoman. The Apostle, therefore, enforces his argument that the fulfilment of the promise depends solely upon God's choice, by adding the facts concerning Esau and Jacob. They were sons of the one mother (verse 10). Moreover, their case shows that God's choice of the heirs of His eternal covenant does not depend upon the merit or demerit of a person, for the preference was given to the younger instead of the elder. The purpose of God holds good simply according to election, and not on subsequent events in the lives of the individuals. The ground of the choice was not their works, but God's call (verse 11). As with the sons, so with their descendants. The whole history of the nations of Edom and Israel is illustrative of the principles the Apostle is laying down. This he confirms by a quotation from Mal. 1. 2, 3, a passage which shows that Malachi has national conditions in view.

As then, prior to the natural birth of Jacob and Esau, God chose the one and rejected the other, so prior to spiritual birth, God decides the terms prescribed in the Gospel irrespective of natural merit or demerit, presenting His conditions only on the ground of faith.

Since God acted on the principle of selection, first in the case of Abraham's children, setting aside natural birth, and secondly in the case of Isaac's children, disregarding human merit, this affords a presumption that in regard to God's spiritual children, on the one hand He would set aside some in the nation of Israel itself, and on the other hand He would bring in Gentiles, making His selection altogether apart both from national conditions and conditions of human conduct, and fulfilling His promise solely in response to faith.

(c) *God's sovereignty stated in the Old Testament. . . . His righteousness established* (9. 14-18).

Thus far in his argument the Apostle has shown God's sovereign right to offer the privileges of the Gospel to whomsoever and on whatever terms He pleased, for no one was entitled to receive these blessings on the ground of works or merit. Accordingly, if the Jews refused the Gospel, the Divine decision to reject them and offer salvation to the Gentiles was unchallengeable.

A Jew might object to this, that to make no distinction between Jew and Gentile, in regard to merit or demerit, would be inconsistent with God's righteousness. This objection, raised in verse 14, Paul now answers.

He shows, as we have mentioned in the analysis of the chapter, that God's sovereignty in these matters was (1) stated, and (2) illustrated in the Old Testament.

Verses 15-18 may be set out thus :—

(1) *Verse* 15 : a statement of principle—God's word to Moses.

(2) *Verse* 16 : an inference therefrom.

(3) *Verse* 17 : an illustration—God's word to Pharaoh.

(4) *Verse* 18 : a deduction from both.

(1) Verse 15 : *a statement of principle.* The statement was made to Moses by God in answer to his intercession for Israel, after God's solemn refusal to go up with them to the land of promise because of their sin in worshipping the golden calf. The Lord's word, as quoted by Paul from the Septuagint, was : " I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion." The suggestion here is that if God showed mercy to Israel after such a flagrant breach of the solemn covenant into which they had entered with Him, surely He could show mercy to Gentiles who had not been guilty of such an act. The mention of Moses, as the one to whom the declaration was made, would appeal specially to a Jew. The emphasis in the parallel statements falls on the word " whom " (rather, and more literally " whomsoever ").

(2) Verse 16 : *an inference.* The Apostle's inference from what has just been stated confirms the principle of God's sovereign right to exercise mercy. The cause lies neither in human will (" him that willeth ") nor in human effort (" him that runneth "—

suggestive of the intense effort of a racer), but in God alone.

(3) Verse 17 : *an illustration.* The special instance of Pharaoh, and the hardening of his heart, serve to explain the present hardened condition of the Jews, for that is one of the Apostle's aims in this chapter. God alone is competent to decide who are to be the objects of His grace, and upon whom He is to inflict a judicial hardening.

We should connect this verse with the 14th. God cannot be charged with unrighteousness. As a matter of fact, the Exodus narrative states that, to begin with, Pharaoh hardened his own heart, and that afterwards God hardened his heart. The R.V. gives the correct rendering in each place. See first, Exod. 3. 19, which establishes the prescience of God; and then 4. 21, which simply foretells what God will eventually do. In the narrative of Pharaoh's conduct itself the statement in 7. 13, is " Pharaoh's heart was hardened " (margin " made strong "); in 9. 7, " Pharaoh's heart was stubborn." Similarly 7. 22, 23, attributes the hardening to Pharaoh; so also 8. 15. It is when we come to 9. 12, that we find the statement : " The Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh." The hardening is again imputed to Pharaoh in 9. 35. In each case after that, it is God who is said to have hardened him, see 10. 1, 20; 11. 10. The Exodus narrative, therefore, makes clear that the hardening was retributive and not merely arbitrary. On the other hand, the passage in Romans

lays stress upon the absolute sovereignty of God. God did not, indeed, make Pharaoh wicked; his punishment was nothing more than he deserved. God withheld mercy from him, and was righteous in doing so. The recipient of pardoning mercy can never boast in his superiority of merit; he who is punished can never charge God with unrighteousness.

The statement, "The Scripture saith unto Pharaoh" is significant. This personification of Scripture intimates its permanent authority and living power, as well as its Divine inspiration. The Apostle's appeal to the Word of God is again a forceful argument in replying to a Jew, who made his boast in the Law.

The idea contained in the words "did I raise thee up" is not merely Pharaoh's exaltation to kingship, but his being sustained in that position instead of being immediately cut off for his self-will. Not the creation of the man is in view, but the object for which God allowed him so long to be maintained in his authority. The Septuagint has "thou hast been preserved."

(4) Verse 18: *a deduction.* This gives the Apostle's conclusion to the whole passage, clinching his point of the unchallengeable sovereignty of God in His dealings with men. His acts are neither capricious nor arbitrary. That He hardens a man or a people is no uncalled-for procedure, but a judicial act.

The emphasis in this verse is on the words "whom He will." The reason for God's dealings is inscrutable to man. He can never charge Him with injustice.

The secret of His dealings lies with the Lord Himself. His acts and their meaning are for men's recognition and instruction.

(d) *God's sovereignty unchallengeable. . . . His longsuffering and mercy* (9. 19-24).

The Apostle now meets a possible objection arising from his statements in verses 17 and 18. This may be put as follows: if God hardens man or has mercy on him, according to His own determination, and if man's wrong doing subserves God's purposes, how is it reasonable for Him to find fault with what simply accomplishes His irresistible will? (verses 19).

This receives a double answer: (1) *verses* 20, 21; (2) *verses* 22-24. (1) The objection reveals an ignorance of the relation between God and man. Man, being a creature, is not in a position to challenge his Creator (verses 20, 21). (2) The objection also reveals ignorance of the sinfulness of man and of the character of God. God has used His sovereign will to exercise longsuffering (verses 22-24).

In (1) the Apostle establishes the sovereignty of God, in (2) he shows in what a merciful way it has been directed.

In (1) he argues, not from the fact of man's sinfulness, but from that of God's righteousness. In (2) he enforces his argument from the facts of man's sinfulness and God's mercy. All men have forfeited any claim upon God's mercy on account of sin. God has not made any man wicked. Man, therefore, can-

not argue unrighteousness in God's dealings, nor, as we shall see, can he charge Him with partiality.

In (1) first Paul urges the folly of a creature's setting himself up against his Creator (verse 21), and then illustrates his point from the potter's art, an illustration frequent in the Old Testament prophets (see Isa. 29. 16; 64. 8; Jer. 18. 3-6, *e.g.*). The potter has a right from the same lump to make one vessel unto honour and another unto dishonour. In (2) he shows how God has actually dealt; He has restrained His merited wrath. The objector might have found some reason for his objection if he had said, "What if God, willing to show His wrath and to make His power known, executed His judgment upon the vessels of wrath?" What he says instead is, "What if God . . . endured with much longsuffering vessels of wrath fitted unto destruction" (verse 21).

Two things are to be noted here. Firstly, the very fact of God's longsuffering implies the exercise of man's free will. Secondly, the form of the verb rendered "fitted" may be regarded as in the middle voice. The middle voice implies action done by oneself in regard to one's own aims and interests. There is a suggestion, therefore, that the persons referred to as "vessels of wrath" have fitted themselves for destruction, and this was actually the case with Pharaoh, as we have seen from Exodus. The Apostle could have used a form of expression stating clearly that they had been fitted unto destruction. That form,

however, is set aside in order to use one which throws the responsibility upon man for the hardness of his heart. What is said in verse 23 as to the vessels of mercy is in striking contrast with this. He does not say, "vessels of mercy prepared unto glory," but "vessels of mercy which He afore prepared unto glory."

The argument is unanswerable. As to the distinction between vessels of wrath and vessels of mercy, the decision must in the nature of the case be left to God. That He shows longsuffering in the case of the former proves that their punishment is not mere arbitrary despotism. The issues in each case not only fulfil His purposes but are the outcome of His inscrutable wisdom. In the actings of His justice and the promptings of His mercy He is answerable to none. Since, on the one hand, in His longsuffering, He forbears to act on principles of mere justice, and on the other hand, makes known the riches of His glory by the display of His mercy, according to His infinite knowledge, all reply to God on the part of man when He makes known His decision is rendered impossible.

The 24th verse brings this part of the argument to a head, showing that Gentiles are included among the vessels of mercy as well as Jews and that this is in accordance not only with the prerogatives of God (see verses 20, 21) but with the principles of His righteous dealing (see verse 14).

(e) *God's sovereignty in relation to Israel and the*

CHAPTER IX.

Gentiles, foretold in the Old Testament (9. 25-29).

The section is divided in two parts: (1) *the inclusion of Gentiles,* (2) *the exclusion of Jews.*

(1) The first part consists of a quotation from Hosea to the effect that blessing was foretold for the Gentiles; (2) the second consists of quotations from Isaiah to the effect that the exclusion of many in Israel was also foretold.

(1) The first answers to the words in verse 18, "So then He hath mercy on whom He will"; (2) the second corresponds to the other statement in that verse, "whom He will be hardeneth." This latter will be expanded in chapter 11. The same thing that happened in the case of Pharaoh has happened in the case of Israel. Pharaoh's self-will called down the retribution of God in hardening his heart; so Israel's persistent resistance against God's will has met with His judgment upon the nation and the salvation of a remnant only.

(1) As to the inclusion of Gentiles (verses 25, 26), the two separate quotations from Hosea are Hos. 1. 10, and 2. 23, but in the opposite order to that of the prophet. The immediate reference in the prophet's mind was to the return of the tribes of Israel from their condition of rejection by God. They, who on account of their sins were called Lo-ammi, "not My people," shall be called "My people," and "in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not My people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the

sons of the Living God." The Apostle, however, shows that in the mind of the Spirit the promise embraces Gentiles, who would be brought into God's favour through the instrumentality of the Gospel; he makes clear that in doing so the Lord is acting in accordance with the principles set forth in Hosea's prophecy. Since Israel had placed themselves on a level with the Gentiles by their departure from God, and had become " not My people," it was both reasonable and compatible with God's mercy, that in recalling a remnant of Israel from their alienated state He should call in others also who are, as Israel had become, not His people.

(2) As to the exclusion of Jews (verses 27-29), in showing that in the case of Israel the salvation of God was to be limited to a number of the nation (though, of course, the nation as such will be restored eventually), the Apostle quotes from two passages in Isaiah, and again in the reverse order of the utterances of the prophet (Isa. 10. 22, 23; 1. 9). " If the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, it is the remnant that shall be saved." The next words follow closely the Septuagint of Isa. 10. 23, " The Lord will execute His word upon the earth, finishing it and cutting it short."

While Paul lamented the condition of his nation, he shows, especially from this quotation, the righteousness of God in thus dealing retributively with His own people. Indeed, he says, quoting again from

Isaiah, that but for the mercy of God Israel would have suffered the same fate as Sodom and Gomorrah. If that reduction of the nation to a small remnant was based upon God's righteousness, the Jew could not complain of the Gospel, for, in the matter of salvation, in reducing the number of the people to those only who believed, God was acting with perfect consistency. The Gospel was, after all, doing only what Isaiah had prophesied.

Isaiah foretold of a remnant yet future; Paul speaks of a remnant in the present day. He takes up this subject again in chapter 11.

(f) *A problem explained . . . faith the key.* (9. 30-33).

In this section the Apostle shows the ground upon which God has dealt both with Jew and Gentile, excluding the majority of the former and bringing in those of the latter who accept the conditions He lays down. These conditions have been stated in the earlier parts of the Epistle, where Paul has shown that God reckons righteousness to a man on the ground of faith. There has been nothing said about the righteousness of faith in the quotations the Apostle has just mentioned. The inference, therefore, which he now draws in verse 30 is based upon the whole argument of the chapter and is consistent with the main teaching of the Epistle, and especially chapters 3 to 5.

This section likewise is divided into two parts: (1) *verses* 30, 31; (2) *verses* 32, 33.

(1) The first contains two contrasting facts, relating to the Gentiles and Israel and standing out as a result of the argument of the chapter; (2) the second gives a statement of the reason why these things are so.

In each part man's responsibility is in view. The blame is laid upon Israel for their present condition. They cannot charge God with arbitrariness. That they have not obtained righteousness is because they have not sought it in the right way.

(1) As to the facts concerning the Gentiles and Israel, "the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith" (verse 30). That recalls chapters 3 and 4. Compare Phil. 3. 9. The reference to attainment does not suggest the result of human effort, but the reception of the blessing accruing to faith. "But Israel, following after a law of righteousness, did not arrive at that law" (verse 31). That is to say, Israel, striving to obtain righteousness before God by keeping the Law, missed the ground upon which alone God reckons righteousness to men.

(2) As to the reason for their failure, "they sought it not by faith, but as it were by works," They relied upon their own merit rather than upon God. An alternative reading, making the verse one sentence, is given in the margin: "Because doing it (*i.e.*, seeking it) not by faith but as were by works, they stumbled

at the Stone of stumbling." Thus the Apostle reintroduces Christ as the one Object of faith.

He shows, too, by quoting again from Isaiah, that the rejection of Christ by the Jews and the reception of all, whether Jew or Gentile, who believe, was foretold in the Old Testament. "Even as it is written, Behold I lay in Zion a stone of stumbling, a rock of offence; and he that believeth on Him shall not be put to shame."

Section (2) Chapter 10.

The Possibilities of Faith.

In order to observe the place of this chapter in the whole section of the Epistle consisting of chapters 9-11, the reader may refer back to the parallel drawn between these three chapters and chapters 3 to 8. (See page 108). In this chapter the Apostle continues the argument of the last, namely, that the Gospel is in perfect harmony with the teaching of the Old Testament (cf. 9. 25-29), and so confirms at the same time what he has pointed out at the end of chapter 9, that the present rejection of Israel finds its explanation in their persistent rejection of God's way of salvation in spite of its having been foretold in the Law and the Prophets, and in their efforts to obtain righteousness by their own works (cf. 9. 30-33). He further develops the other point of his argument at the close of chapter 9, that the terms upon which salvation is

offered were to be open alike to the Gentiles and to the Jews, for faith is not the exclusive possession of any one nation. Furthermore, as he has already pointed out, the Old Testament had predicted the inclusion of believing Gentiles. Thus chapter 10 expands 9. 24-33.

The tenth chapter may be divided into four sections as follows :—

(a) *The cause of the rejection of Israel* (verses 1-4).
(b) *The righteousness of faith* (verses 5-10).
(c) *Faith possible to Jew and Gentile* (verses 11-17).
(d) *Israel's unbelief and the faith of Gentiles foretold in the Old Testament* (verses 18-21).

(a) *The cause of the rejection of Israel* (10. 1-4).

This section is introductory to the chapter and runs parallel to verses 1-5 of chapter 9. The introduction to chapter 9 expressed (1) Paul's deep sorrow for the condition of his nation, (2) in view of their high privileges which they had abused. The introduction to chapter 10 expresses (1) his fervent prayer for their salvation (2) in view of their ignorant zeal.

Verse 1. " His heart's desire (or literally " good pleasure ") and supplication to God for Israel is that they may be saved " — a proof that the case of the nation is not without hope. Let spiritual desires always be turned into prayer.

Verse 2 gives a proof of their need. They had a zeal for God which was not regulated by knowledge, and Paul knew it well, for he had shared the zeal in former days (Acts 22. 3). The word "knowledge" would be the more adequately rendered "full knowledge," *i.e.*, correct knowledge. That kind of zeal leads to the substitution of error for truth and inspires a persecuting spirit. Paul's attitude is an example to us to pray especially for all who have a mistaken zeal for God.

Verse 3 expands verse 2 and shows the cause of the trouble, explaining their present condition. The root of the trouble is twofold: (1) ignorance of God's righteousness; (2) reliance on their own righteousness. Hence the failure to grasp the actual relations between God and man, and their rejection of the Divine conditions in the Gospel. The word rendered "being ignorant" is in the position of emphasis. The repetition of the phrase "the righteousness of God" makes that also emphatic. Submission to God's righteousness and the acceptance of His offer involve the laying aside of self-effort.

Verse 4 explains verse 3, showing precisely how the Jews were mistaken. They missed the purposes of God in sending Christ, so that He became a stumbling-block to them. That Christ is the end of the Law unto righteousness to everyone that believeth is best explained by Galatians 3. 23-26, where "the Apostle's meaning is, 'We were kept in ward under the Law,

. . . with the coming of Christ in view, until that took place.' There was no way of escape from the strict surveillance and the unrelenting condemnation of the Law. The condemnatory power of the Law was not an end in itself. Its restraints were necessary that Christ might be welcome when He came."*

The order of the original in this phrase is as follows: "For the end of the Law is Christ unto righteousness to everyone that believeth." And thus the whole of the clause from "Christ" to "believeth" might be taken as describing "the end of the Law." The man who puts faith in Christ becomes, through Christ, "the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Cor. 5. 21). His faith is reckoned for righteousness. His relations with God are adjusted by his acceptance of God's terms in Christ, a condition which is impossible under the terms of the Law. The emphasis of the sentence is thus seen to be upon "Christ." Faith in Christ puts an end to self-righteousness. Verse 4 should be connected with 9. 33.

(b) *The righteousness of faith* (10. 5-10).

This section, following closely upon the statement in verse 4, sets in contrast "the righteousness which is of the law," and "the righteousness which is of faith." The Apostle shows that the latter, instead of being a new thing altogether, was plainly set forth in Deuteronomy. In this section He explains the

* "The Epistle of Paul to the Galatians." By C. F. Hogg and W. E. Vine, p. 165.

statement in verse 4 that "Christ is the end of the Law unto righteousness to everyone that believeth."

In verse 5 the Apostle prepares the way for the subject of the righteousness which is of faith, by referring to the statement of Moses in Lev. 18. 5, regarding the Law, that "the man which doeth these things shall live thereby." Literally it is "the man that hath done these things," the whole past life being under review. The doing is to be lifelong, and is never for a moment to fall below the Divine standard. A Jew thus perfectly meeting the requirements of God would thereby find life. No one save Christ has ever so acted. We should note the intimation in this verse that righteousness, the perfect adjustment of a man's relations with God, involves life.

In verses 6-8, setting forth the righteousness which is of faith, the Apostle quotes from Deut. 30. 11-14, showing that the book of the Law taught the very principles of the Gospel concerning justification by faith. "The righteousness," he says, "which is of faith saith thus . . ." He follows this with the Deuteronomy quotation (taken from the Septuagint) with certain modifications. These changes, and some parenthetic explanations, are made so as to apply the details of the passage to the hearers the more pointedly. The chief modifications are as follows:—

(1) He explains the words, "Say not in thy heart, Who shall ascend into heaven?" by the statement, "that is, to bring Christ down." Then,

changing the word "sea" to "abyss," he explains "Who shall descend into the abyss?" by the statement, "that is to bring Christ up from the dead," showing that in the mind of the Spirit these words of Moses, though used by him of the Law, were intended to bear also an interpretation with reference to the Gospel.

In changing the word "sea" into "abyss" Paul simply passes from the literal sense to give the new spiritual scope of the passage. The fact that Christ had accomplished His redemptive work on the Cross, and had ascended to heaven, accounts for the change.

(2) Again, the statement "the word is nigh thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart" is explained by "that is, the word of faith, which we preach." What was true of the Law was equally applicable to the Gospel.

(3) The words in Deut. 30. 12, "that we may do it," repeated in the next verse, are omitted, as also is the clause in verse 14, "that thou mayest do it." For the Apostle's subject here is not the deeds of the Law but "the word of faith" and "the hearing of faith."

Moreover, Moses had said "Neither with you only do I make this covenant and this oath; but . . . also with him that is not here with us this day" (Deut.

29. 14, 15). This the Targums* explain as meaning "every generation, and every race unto the world's end," indicating that even in the mind of the Jews the words had a wider application than to the nation of Israel. Further, the commands in this second covenant in Deuteronomy, chapters 29 and 30, contain no mention of ceremonial rites or observances. When circumcision is referred to, it is circumcision of the heart (verse 6). It is significant, too, that Moses now speaks of God Himself as their life (30. 20), as well as the Law (32. 47). Earlier he had simply said that life would be given as a result of obedience (Lev. 18. 5).

This closing declaration by Moses concerning the Law, uttered just prior to his death, and at the close of the forty years of the sojourning of the people in the wilderness, contains, then, clear intimations that faith was the principle upon which even Israel must act. Not that in the mind of Moses justification by faith was in view, for he was there enforcing the Divine demands of perfect obedience to the Law; but rather that the Spirit of God prepared, through Moses, the way for the Apostle to apply the words to the subject of justification by faith.

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* The Targums are Aramaic versions of the Old Testament, with notes and explanations, made by the Jews early in the present era.

While presenting a contrast between the righteousness which is of the Law, and the righteousness which is of faith, he shows that there is this point of similarity, in that both the Law and the Gospel were not inaccessible, but were "in the heart and in the mouth." He shows, too, that the essential difference between the Law and the Gospel lies in the facts of the Advent, Death, Resurrection and Ascension of Christ, events which could never have been brought about by human effort. Man could neither bring Christ down from heaven, nor raise Him from the dead. Works are ruled out. Man can do nothing. God has done all. The facts must be accepted by faith. Hence he calls the Gospel "the word of faith," that is, the message which demands faith as the sole condition for justification—faith, with its recognition of human helplessness and Divine sufficiency.

Verse 9 gives the contents of "the word of faith," and states two things necessary to salvation: (a) confession, (b) faith. (a) The confession consists of the acknowledgment of Jesus as Lord: "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord"; (b) faith accepts the fact that God has raised Him from the dead. This is more than the mere acceptance of the historic fact. It is a matter of the heart and not merely of the mind. It involves the appropriation of the promises of God, as fulfilled in the Death and Resurrection of Christ.

Confession is put first for the following reasons:—

(1) as being appropriate to the order, mouth and heart, as in verse 8.

(2) because the order of the Lordship of Christ and His resurrection from the dead are in agreement with the order in verses 6 and 7, verse 6 speaking of His present position in heaven, verse 7 of His resurrection from the dead.

(3) because confession of the Lordship of Christ is the evidence of faith.

(4) because confession of Jesus as Lord provides the evident and distinctive difference between those who have been justified by faith and those who are seeking righteousness by their own works (cf. 1 Cor. 12. 3).

Verse 10 gives, with reference to the Gospel, a proof of the statement in verse 8, "the word is nigh thee, in thy mouth and in thine heart." The actual order is here given: faith first, and then confession. In order to be saved, righteousness must be reckoned, and this depends upon faith, but faith necessarily leads to confession. Absence of confession betokens lack of faith. The term "salvation" is used here in its broadest sense. It is that of which the Apostle Peter speaks as "the end of our faith" (1 Pet. 1. 9). It is not only deliverance from perdition, it is the issue of a life that acknowledges the Lordship of Christ (cf. Gal. 2. 20).

(c) *Faith possible to Jew and Gentile* (10. 11-17).

This section is divided into two parts: (1) 11-13 and (2) 14-17. In (1) the point is the universal possibilities of faith; in (2) the means by which faith is produced.

(1) In the preceding section (b), verses 5-10, Paul has been giving a proof of his statement in verse 4 that Christ is the end of the Law unto righteousness to everyone that believeth, and he has done so by applying the teaching of Moses to the Gospel, and showing that the former foreshadowed the latter. He now confirms the teaching of Moses by that of Isaiah, and thus resumes his quotation given in chapter 9. 33, that "whosoever believeth on Him shall not be put to shame." There he showed that Israel's failure was owing to unbelief. Faith was open to the Jew, for "whosoever believeth on Him shall not be put to shame." Here he uses the same words to demonstrate that the "whosoever" includes Gentiles as well as Jews. He adds a word to the quotation from Isaiah in order to strengthen his proof. Isaiah said, "He that believeth," Paul says, "Everyone that believeth."

The subject of confession is dropped. For the Apostle's argument has to do especially with faith, and faith alone is here dealt with. Verse 12 confirms the fact that Isaiah's "whosoever" was not confined to the Jewish nation. The "whosoever" means that there is no distinction between Jew and Greek. Paul uses the same word as in 3. 22. There he said, "there is no distinction, for all have sinned." Now he says,

"there is no distinction, all may be saved." The Apostle expands his proof by passing from the universal offer of salvation to the bounty of the Provider. But the Provider is not merely a bountiful Being, He is one who has absolute authority: "the same Lord is Lord of all, and is rich unto all them that call upon Him."

Again, in 3. 29, 30, the Apostle shows that God was the same God both for Jew and Gentile. Here he states that the same Lord is Lord of both. In Scripture "calling upon God" is always a habit, not a single act (cf. Gen. 4. 26; Zech. 13. 9; Acts 2. 21; 9. 14; 1 Cor. 1. 2; 2 Tim. 2. 22; 1. Pet. 1. 17). In 3. 29, he was referring to God the Father. Here apparently he is referring to Christ. Cf. Acts 2. 36; 10. 36.

Verse 13 confirms verses 11 and 12 by a quotation from the LXX of Joel 2. 32. Joel foretold that salvation would be granted, not on the ground of nationality, but on that of calling upon the name of the Lord. The obliteration of national distinctions was intimated in his words "all flesh" (2. 28).

(2) In *verse* 14 the Apostle turns from the "whosoever" aspect of faith to the means of its production. The four questions asked in verses 14 and 15 strengthen his argument as to the universality of the Gospel. Each question tacitly assumes this universality, which indeed is one of the main points in his argument. Paul is vindicating the offer of salvation to Jew and Gentile alike.

He leads from Joel 2. 32, to Isaiah 52. 7. He argues from effect to cause. Calling on the Lord necessitates faith; faith necessitates hearing; hearing necessitates preaching; preaching sending. The sending was God's Divine purpose, as the Scriptures had foretold. Why, then, should his fellow countrymen be jealous of his preaching to Gentiles? The Apostle's quotation from Isaiah 52. 7, breathes his own joy in the spread of the Gospel, and the part he was taking in it.

In *verses* 16 and 17 the Apostle's statement, "But they did not all hearken to the glad tidings," does not seem to be the interruption of a supposed objector, it is rather a continuation of the Apostle's argument that the unbelief of Israel was foretold. This he confirms from the words of Isaiah 53, "Lord who hath believed our report." Though Isaiah's words were immediately applicable to Israel, they suggest by implication the universality of the good tidings. The Apostle's main point here, however, is, that there must be a report to be believed, that is to say, that there must be a proclamation of the Gospel, if it is to be heard, and that there must be a hearing, if the Word is to be believed. As faith is demanded from all men, the proclamation of the Gospel, which is pre-requisite, must be universal.

The subject of faith in verses 1-17 may be taken under the following headings, with a suggestion of chronological order:—

(1) The word of faith (verse 8).

(2) The hearing of faith (verse 17).
(3) The saving power of faith (verse 9).
(4) The righteousness of faith (verses 6, 10).
(5) The confidence of faith (verse 11).

(d) *Israel's Unbelief and the Acceptance of Gentiles, foretold in the Old Testament* (10. 18-21).

In this closing section of chapter 10 the Apostle argues against Jewish excuses for unbelief. He asks two rhetorical questions, to meet the two possible excuses, that all had not an opportunity of receiving the good tidings, and that the information was not given :—

(1) "Is it that they did not hear?"
(2) "Did Israel not know?"*

The first is asked with a view to make clear that all had an opportunity of hearing the good tidings; the second, to show that Israel was told of God's purposes.

The first is answered from Ps. 19. 4, which, while primarily referring to the universal testimony to God in nature, is here shown to have contained a foreshadowing of the universal proclamation of the Gospel. The Psalm itself couples together the voice of creation and the written Word.

*There are two ways of understanding this latter question: (1) Did Israel not know the Gospel? (2) Did Israel not know that God would save Gentiles? The latter is perhaps more in keeping with the context, and is indicated by the quotations which follow.

The second question is answered from Deut. 32. 21. The phrase, " a nation void of understanding," stands for the Gentiles, whose ignorance is displayed in their idolatry (cf. 1. 21). Moses had foretold not only that God would show favour to Gentiles, but also that He would thereby move Israel to jealousy.

That the Gentiles would receive blessing was also predicted by Isaiah. " Isaiah is very bold " (verse 20). He prophesied at the risk of his life. He goes further, too, than Moses. He predicts that the Gentiles would be the cause of provoking the Jews to jealousy. The Gentiles, who formerly did not ask of God, would seek Him and find Him, and He would become manifest unto them.

A final quotation, from Isa. 65. 2, lays to the charge of Israel the cause of their condition, in their disobedience and gainsaying, in spite of God's longsuffering and patient invitation. They had been guilty both in act (disobedience), and in word (gainsaying).

In showing that the Jews are inexcusably ignorant, the Apostle has now completed his proof, which he began in chapter 9. 6, that the Gospel and its effects are in accordance with the teaching of the Old Testament. The glad tidings of salvation by faith were proclaimed to all. Only a small part of the nation, however, has accepted the salvation. The nation as a whole has been guilty of unbelief, and has rejected God's offers of mercy. While Christ has become a

stumbling-stone to the Jews, Gentiles have become "sons of the living God."

Section (3) Chapter 11.

God's Grace and Mercy.

The subject of this chapter is the exhibition of God's sovereignty in grace and mercy, in the case both of Israel and of the Gentiles, individually at the present time, and nationally in the future.

In regard to Israel, though they have not attained to righteousness owing to their unbelief (*chapter* 9), and have brought Divine retribution upon them by their disobedience and gainsaying (*chapter* 10), yet their rejection is to be neither (1) total, nor (2) final. That it is not total the Apostle proves from present facts; that it is not final is established, he says, upon Divine election, and upon the gifts and calling of God. Consistent with the fact that the rejection is not total, is the bringing of individual Gentiles on to the same ground of grace as the believing Jews, who form a present spiritual remnant; and owing to the fact that the rejection is not final, the restoration of the nation will involve the blessing of all the Gentile nations. In view of this, the Apostle concludes the chapter with an adoring exclamation in recognition of the wisdom and knowledge of God in the display of His mercy. In the first part of the chapter *grace* is especially in view; in the latter part *mercy*.

Grace is shown towards Jews in that there is a

present spiritual remnant (verse 5), and towards Gentiles in that salvation has come to them (verse 11). *Mercy* is to be shown nationally first towards Israel (verse 20) and so toward Gentiles as nations (verse 32).

This chapter gives a beautiful illustration of the interweaving of God's providential arrangements. The circumstances under consideration are seen to be to one another as cause and effect :—

(1) Israel's downfall has resulted in the carrying of the Gospel to the Gentiles (verses 11, 12, 15, 30).

(2) But this present mercy to Gentiles will lead to the obtaining of mercy by Israel (verses 26, 31).

(3) The mercy thus shown in the restoration of Israel will result in universal blessing (verse 15).

To the opening question, "Did God cast off His people?" there are three replies, which cover the ground of the whole chapter. Israel is not utterly given up, for

(1) Paul Himself is an Israelite, and therefore a spiritual remnant exists (verses 1-10).

(2) One of the reasons why God is calling Gentiles into His favour is in order that He may show mercy to Israel; so He could not have rejected His people (verses 11-24).

(3) God will fulfil His promise to the nation in the coming of their Deliverer (verses 25 to end).

The chapter may be divided into the following sections :—

(a) *Israel not cast off, a remnant saved* (verses 1-6).

(b) *Israel in temporary hardness* (verses 7-10).

(c) *Gentiles blessed through Israel's fall : Israel's restoration will mean world-wide blessing* (verses 11-15).

(d) *The illustration of the olive trees* (verses 16-24).

(e) *God's mercy present and future* (verses 25-36).

(a) *Israel not cast off, a remnant saved* (11. 1-6).

The question in *verse* 1, " Did God cast off His people? " follows on from the two questions in the preceding chapter, verses 18, 19. The Apostle gives three proofs that God has not cast Israel off :—

(1) Firstly, he says three things concerning himself : (i.) that he is an Israelite. He means, not that being an Israelite he could not believe that God had cast off His people, but rather that his own experience of God's salvation is a proof that God has not given up the nation, and that he himself did not teach such a thing. See his strong asseveration in 9. 1. (ii.) That

he is of the seed of Abraham, that is to say, a descendant of the one to whom God gave the promises. (iii.) That he is of the tribe of Benjamin, a tribe which was preserved from destruction (Judg. 21) which, with Judah, remained faithful to God after the return from exile (Ezra 4. 1; 10. 9; cf. Phil. 3. 5).

(2) The second proof, *verse* 2, that God has not cast off Israel is that they are "His people which He foreknew." They were foreordained to be His people, and must be so for ever, for, as the Apostle says later on in the chapter, "the gifts and calling of God are without repentance" (verse 29).

(3) Verses 2-5. The third proof consists of an illustration from the times of Elijah. The prophet pleaded with God that he was the only faithful one left in the nation. God, however, had left for Himself seven thousand men who had not bowed to Baal; so now, says the Apostle, "there is a remnant according to the election of grace." That is to say, there is a spiritual remnant as a result of the Gospel, and this fact is itself a pledge that the nation is not completely forsaken. That the remnant of believing Jews is comparatively small is an evidence of God's electing grace, though as a matter of fact there were considerable numbers of Jews who had become followers of Christ, so much so that James speaks of "the many myriads" of believing Jews (Acts 21. 20, margin).

Verse 6. The mention of grace leads the Apostle to enforce again the distinction between grace and works,

a distinction which he has carried through the whole argument of his Epistle thus far. If the remnant is the result of the election of grace, "it is no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace." The first occurrence of the distinction was in chapter 3. 24-28. There he began the explanation of the Gospel doctrine of justification by faith. The next was in chapter 4, verses 1-8. There he was giving illustrations of the doctrine from the case of Abraham and from Psalm 32. The third was in chapter 9. 11. There he showed that the fulfilment of the purposes of God depends not on works, but on God's own choice and call. The fourth was in 9. 30, to 10. 13. There he explained that the failure of Israel to attain to righteousness was due to seeking it by works, instead of receiving it by faith. Fifthly, here in 11. 1-6, Divine grace, not human works, is responsible for the existence of the present spiritual Jewish remnant.

(b) *Israel in temporary hardness, Gentiles in possession of salvation* (11. 7-10).

This section consists of two parts:—(1) Verse 7. The spiritual remnant in Israel is set in contrast with the rest of the nation. (2) Verses 8-10. The second parts shows, by cause and effect, how salvation is come to the Gentiles, and what bearing that will have upon the Jews.

(1) Verse 7. "What then? That which Israel

seeketh for, that he obtained not"; this recalls 9. 31. 32. "But the election obtained it"; of this, Paul has stated that he himself is an example (11. 1). "And the rest were hardened"; this is parallel to 9. 18.

(2) Verses 8-10. The same thing that happened in Pharaoh's case has taken place in the nation itself. They first hardened their own heart, and so "God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes that they should not see and ears that they should not hear" (Isa. 29. 10; cf. Deut. 29. 4; Isa. 43. 8; Jer. 5. 21; Ezek. 12. 2; Matt. 13. 14). This is confirmed by the words of Ps. 69. 22, 23. "The table" stands for that which is upon it and is symbolical of the special privileges granted to Israel and centring in Christ.

(c) *Gentiles blessed through Israel's Fall. Israel's Restoration will bring world-wide blessing* (11. 11-15).

Having declared that Israel's rejection is not total, the Apostle now shows that neither is it final, and, more still, that their present condition has been overruled for blessing to the Gentiles. This section itself contains two views of this subject—one present, the other future: (1) the salvation of individual Gentiles through the Gospel (verse 11), (2) the universal blessing of Gentile nations (verses 12-15).

(1) In verse 11 the Apostle introduces this section with the same words, "I say then," as in verse 1.

He presses home his point by his characteristic mode of rhetorical question. "Did they stumble that they might fall?" that is to say, "Did they stumble over Christ so as to fall irretrievably?" "God forbid," he replies, "but by their fall (or rather *trespass,* as in the margin) salvation is come unto the Gentiles." The word rendered "fall" is different from that in the question preceding. It denotes a moral trespass, as, *e.g.,* in 5. 15. How the bringing of salvation to the Gentiles through the Gospel is the result of its rejection by the Jews, was stated by Paul himself to the Jews, first at Antioch, and later at Rome, as recorded in Acts 13. 46; 28. 28. The Lord turned the very condition of the Jews into a means of the furtherance of the Gospel.

The conversion of Gentiles was, however, intended to react upon the Jews, so as to arouse them to emulation; not to stir them merely to jealousy, in the evil sense of the word, but to arouse them to a desire for recovery of the Divine favour.

(2) *Verse* 12 points on from the present to the future. The first two clauses are parallel, and give different views of the same thing: "Now if their fall is the riches of the world, and their loss the riches of the Gentiles"—that is to say, if their fall, with their consequent temporary rejection by God, has meant that the spiritual riches of the Gospel have come to all men everywhere, if, in other words, their loss of privileges and blessing has meant the enrich-

ment of the Gentiles through the preaching of the Gospel, "how much more their fulness?"—that is to say, "what still greater blessings will accrue from the ultimate national restoration of the Jews!" The Divine riches will be bestowed, not merely on individuals as in the present era, but upon the nations of the world as a whole.

This verse embraces four great phases of human history, relative to Jews and Gentiles:—

(a) *The present rejection of Israel.*
(b) *The present offer of salvation to Gentiles.*
(c) *the future national restoration of the Jews.*
(d) *The universal blessing of Gentile nations.*

(a) has led to (b); (b) will issue in (c); (c) will lead to (d). Verse 12 thus sums up the whole chapter as regards the Divine dealings with nations.

This same fourfold view is to be resumed in verse 15. Meanwhile verses 13 and 14 are somewhat parenthetic, though they confirm and expand the closing clause of verse 11, and express the Apostle's personal feelings, aims and methods. He speaks to the Gentiles in order to explain his attitude. He says, "But I speak to you that are Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle of Gentiles, I glorify my ministry." The word "I" bears emphasis. Cf. Acts 9. 15; Gal. 2. 7, 8; Eph. 3. 8.

Verse 14 explains why he glorifies his ministry. It is in order that he may provoke to jealousy those who are his fellow-nationals, and may save some of them.

This explains also the word " jealousy " at the end of verse 11. Its outcome was to be salvation in the case of those who accepted the Gospel.

In verse 15 the four dispensational events intimated in verse 12 are mentioned again, only in a different way. And whereas the fourth (d) was merely implied in verse 12 in the incomplete question " how much more their fulness? " here it is definitely stated. We may set the four out as follows, as in verse 12: (a) " For if the casting away of them (b) is the reconciling of the world, (c) what shall the receiving of them be, (d) but life from the dead? "

(a) " The fall " of Israel is now spoken of as " the casting away " of the nation; (b) " the riches " of the world is now called " the reconciling," not that all men are to be reconciled to God, but that all who will may be reconciled; (c) " the fulness " of Israel is here spoken of as " the receiving " of them, *i.e.*, their reception and God's favour in the Millennial blessing; (d) the condition of blessedness intimated in verse 12 is here called " life from the dead "—not physical resurrection, but a state of the world-wide enjoyment of God's favour instead of the present condition of alienation from God.

(d) *The illustration of the olive trees* (11. 16-24).

The preceding section, verses 11-15, has prepared the way for the following proof that salvation is

assured to Israel. The Apostle continues his address to the Gentiles, warning them against self-complacency and against despising the Jews. He adopts the metaphors of the firstfruit and the lump, on the one hand, and the good olive tree and the wild olive tree on the other.

The section consists of two parts: (1) *verses* 16-22, in which he warns Gentile believers against glorying because of the present rejection of the Jews and the favour shown to the Gentiles; (2) *verses* 23, 24, in which he not only foretells the restoration of Israel, but shows that it is even more to be expected than that God should have called the Gentiles into favour. In the earlier part of the chapter he had spoken of the prospect of Israel's restoration; he now states the grounds upon which it is assured, just as in the first section he showed that the present existence of a spiritual remnant of Israel is a proof that God has not cast off the nation.

(1) *Verses* 16-22. The first metaphor is that of the firstfruit and the lump. "But if the firstfruit is holy, so is the lump." The reference is apparently to Numbers 15. 21, where the command to Israel was to give to the Lord the first of their dough as a heave offering. Cf. Nehemiah 10. 37. The second metaphor is that of the olive tree. "If the root is holy, so are the branches." In the former case the firstfruit, and in the latter the root, refer particularly to Abraham, the progenitor of Israel. To him the promise was

made regarding his descendants. Abraham was set apart by God Himself, and the covenant was made both with him and with his seed. Since he, as the firstfruit and the root, belongs to God, then the nation that has sprung from him, the lump and the branches, must also belong to God. See verse 28 below and cf. 9. 5.

"*But if some of the branches were broken off*"—*i.e.*, the unbelieving Jews. Cf. 3. 3.

"*and thou, being a wild olive*"—the Gentile, a member of those nations which God had suffered to walk in their own ways (Acts 14. 16).

"*was grafted in among them*"—*i.e.*, admitted to the privileges of God's favour, which some of His own people had forfeited.

"*and didst become partaker with them of the root of the fatness of the olive tree*"—*i.e.*, didst become a spiritual descendant of Abraham and partake of the spiritual life and blessing which belonged to him and his descendants by Divine covenant.

"*glory not over the branches: but if thou gloriest, it is not thou that bearest the root, but the root thee.*" Salvation was from the Jews (John 4. 22): therefore converted Gentiles had no reason for glorying over Jews who became subjects of Divine disfavour through unbelief.

"*Thou wilt say then, Branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in.*"—Even the fact that the rejection of Israel occasioned the call of Gentiles, gave

no ground for glorying, as if Gentiles were any better than the Jews.

"*Well*: *by their unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear*:" —*i.e.*, granted that Jews were rejected because of their unbelief, there was no personal merit in the Gentiles by which they became recipients of the Divine favour. That favour was bestowed on the condition of faith, and faith excludes all boasting (3. 27). Indeed, there is need of fear lest faith should be abandoned for unbelief.

"*for if God spared not the natural branches, neither will He spare thee.*"—If those who were natural descendants of Abraham, and so partakers of the blessings of the covenant, were deprived of their privileges through unbelief, how much more has the Gentile reason to beware of the danger that God will not spare him, who by nature was a stranger from the covenant of the promise (Eph. 2. 5).

"*Behold then the goodness and severity of God; toward them that fell, severity;*"—the present, temporary, retributive dealings of God with the unbelieving nation.

"*but towards thee, God's goodness, if thou continue in His goodness; otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.*" —His goodness lies in showing mercy to the Gentiles through the Gospel. The warning here does not signify that a believer can lose his salvation. Paul is not now dealing with the subject of spiritual union

with Christ. That he had shown in chapter 8 to be inseparable (8. 1, 30 to 39). He is here speaking of the principles upon which God has acted towards Jew and Gentile. The Gentile needs to be warned of the danger of an evil heart of unbelief as much as a Jew, and of coming under the disciplinary severity of God.

"*And they also, if they continue not in their unbelief, shall be grafted in*: "—In this latter part of the section the Apostle is not speaking of the restoration of the whole nation. That he did in section (c) and it will be taken up again in (e). Here he is referring to the present grafting in of individual Jews who abide not in unbelief but turn to God through the Gospel.

"*for God is able to graft them in again.*"—That is to say, not only has God the power to do this, but the obstacle to His doing so lies in unbelieving Jews themselves, as long as they continue in their unbelief. There is no difficulty with God. On the contrary, the Apostle shows in the next verse that, from the point of view of the illustration, it is more to be expected that God would restore Jews to His favour than that He should bring Gentiles into it.

"*For it thou wast cut out of that which is by nature a wild olive tree, and wast grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree*: "—*i.e.*, if a Gentile, who was a stranger to the covenants of promise, was taken from his natural alienated condition and brought through the Gospel into the spiritual blessings contained in God's promise to Abraham.

"how much more shall these who are the natural branches be grafted into their own olive tree!"—i.e., it is still more probable that Jews, the natural descendants of Abraham, should be brought into the spiritual privileges contained in the promise given to their own ancestor, for nationally they have a covenant relationship with God already, which is not the case with Gentiles.

This illustration of the olive tree views the kingdom of God as essentially one in two different phases. The tree is the same tree with two stages of growth. The change brought in by the Gospel was a new development of the one kingdom, in which latter phase unbelieving Jews were excluded from the kingdom and believing Jews brought in.

(e) *God's mercy, present and future* (11. 25-36).

This section contains three parts: (1) *Verses* 25-27, (2) *verses* 28-32, (3) *verses* 33-36.

In (1) the Apostle shows that the temporary hardening of Israel and the eventual restoration of the nation form a subject of Divine revelation. In (2) he shows that God's immutable promise to the fathers makes Israel still and permanently His people; and, further, that the three phases of His dealings with them and with Gentiles in regard to the Gospel, namely, the present rejection of the Jews, the present

mercy to the Gentiles, and the ultimate mercy to the Jews, are matters of cause and effect. See (a), (b), and (c) above. In (3) his contemplation of God's mercy evokes an exclamation of wonder and adoration.

(1) *Verses* 25-27. Israel's temporary hardness is a fresh subject of Divine revelation. The Apostle speaks of it as a "mystery," something beyond the ability of the natural mind to discover, but made known to those who are enlightened by the Spirit of God. A mystery in Scripture is always something which God intends His people to know. This is confirmed in the present instance by the Apostle's words, "I would not, brethren, have you ignorant of this mystery."*

The knowledge of this mystery was to be a preventive against an assumption of superior wisdom on the part of believing Gentiles, as if it was due to them that what Israel refused they have received. The mystery is this, that "a hardening in part hath befallen Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles is come in." There are two limitations to this hardening, (a) extent, (b) duration. (a) The hardening is not universal, but "in part." This recalls verses 1-7, especially verse 7. (b) Nor is it final. The time limit is the coming in

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*See **The Twelve Mysteries of Scripture**, by the writer, pp. 8-11, and especially chapter 8, pp. 67-74.

of "the fulness of the Gentiles." This phase cannot mean the blessing of the Gentiles as a whole, for that is to be consequent upon Israel's restoration, and not preliminary to it. Nor, again, does it denote the consummation of the times of the Gentiles, the period during which world dominion is granted to Gentile powers. Nor can it mean the consummation of Gentile iniquity. The reference seems to be to the whole number of Gentiles who partake of the blessings of salvation in the present age. The phrase does not stand for quite the same thing as the Church, for Jews who have accepted Christ have become part of the Church, and those are distinct here from Gentiles. Paul is speaking of God's dispensational dealings with Jew and Gentile.

When the number is complete, all Israel shall be saved (verse 26), *i.e.*, nationally, not all who ever were Israelites in the past, but the nation as a whole in its restored condition at the beginning of the Millennium. This, too, is a subject of Divine revelation. Paul quotes first from the Septuagint of Isa. 59. 20, 21, where "out of Zion" is put instead of "to Zion." Both are true. See Ps. 14. 7; 53. 6; 110. 2; Joel 2. 32; 3. 16; Zech. 14. 4, etc. He finishes his quotation from the Septuagint of Isa. 27. 9, "Therefore shall the iniquity of Jacob be taken away."

(2) *Verses* 28-32. In the preceding section, verses 25-27, the Apostle pointed out that the present con-

dition and future restoration of Israel were matters of Divine revelation. Now he shows that they are consistent with the character of God, with His *wisdom, immutability* and *mercy*. Firstly, as to His *wisdom*, this is manifested in the working out of His plans: "As touching the Gospel, they are enemies for your sake," literally, "on account of you." That is, God is judicially opposed to the Jews because of their disobedience, and owing to this He is bringing Gentiles into the mercy from which Israel as a nation has been temporarily excluded. Secondly, as to His *immutability*, "as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sake. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." The nation is still the subject of God's love (Deut. 7. 8), because of the unalterable covenants of promise, given to the fathers (Deut. 9. 5; 10. 15). Having been chosen as His people their future restoration is sure. God changes His attitude toward men consistently with His own character, owing to their change of attitude toward Him, but this does not alter His promises. The immutability of His own character ensures the fulfilment of His covenant. God's various dealings with men are the actings of His eternal, unchanging counsel, and are in accordance with His foreknowledge of the ways and doings of men. The "gifts" are those privileges which the Apostle has enumerated in chapter 9. verses 4, 5. The "calling" is the Divine relationship into which Israel has been brought as a nation.

Thirdly, as to His *mercy*, in verses 30 to 32 the Apostle confirms the statement of verse 29, by showing how God's plans in regard to Jew and Gentile have worked out, and will work out, in the exercise of His mercy.

Verses 30 *and* 31 indicate God's providential arrangements in two parallels as follows: "For as ye in time past were disobedient to God, but now have obtained mercy by their disobedience, even so have these also now been disobedient, that by the mercy shown to you they also may obtain mercy." The parallel may be set out as follows:—

(a) The Gentiles were disobedient;
(b) but now through the disobedience of the Jews
(c) the Gentiles have obtained mercy.
(a) The Jews are now disobedient;
(b) but by the mercy to the Gentiles
(c) the Jews will obtain mercy.

Verse 30 shows the relations of Gentiles and Jews with reference to the past and the present, verse 31 with reference to the present and the future. The parallel contains a distinction. On the one hand the disobedience of the Jews leads to mercy to the Gentiles (verse 30), on the other, mercy to the Gentiles is to lead to mercy to the Jews (verse 31). In *verse* 31 the order in the original is, "So these also now were disobedient through your mercy, that they also might obtain mercy." In that case the salvation of the Gentiles would be regarded as the

cause of the unbelief of the Jews; that is to say, they would be stumbled by the promise of salvation to the Gentiles. But the rendering given in the English texts is not only possible but almost certainly accurate, because of the stress the Apostle is laying upon the word "mercy."

Verse 32 brings the argument to its climax and gives a final proof that God will yet show mercy to Israel and so to the world. "God hath shut up all unto disobedience, that He might have mercy upon all." This recalls chapter 3. 19-24. That passage demonstrates how all the world was brought under the judgment of God, and how whereas all have sinned, God's grace has been extended toward all. This passage shows the interweaving of God's plans with a view to His world-wide mercy. God has so ordered that the disobedience of the Gentiles and of the Jews may be brought home to them, and that they should all of them stand convicted in His sight as sinners. The statement is similar to that of Gal. 3. 22. There the Apostle's point was that the impossibility of keeping the Law of God was the evidence of the sinful condition of mankind, and that God shut up all under sin that the promise of life and righteousness through faith in Christ might be given to all who believe, whether Jew or Gentile; there was no possibility of escape from the effects of sin by human effort. Here his point is that God has so ordered in His providence that all men should be convicted of disobedience, with-

out possibility of escape from the position by human merit, in order that He might display His mercy. Jew and Gentile must receive mercy on the same footing, namely, sovereign grace.

There is no intimation in this verse of universal salvation; the plain meaning is that God has had mercy on the human race in the present age by offering the Gospel to Jew and Gentile alike, without any distinction of nationality, and that when Israel as a nation is restored to Divine favour and privilege in the earth, He will show His mercy to all nations, *i.e.*, in the Millennium. The word "all," in reference to Israel, is to be viewed in the light of verse 26, and, as to the Gentiles, in the light of what is said in verses 12-25. In whatever way man enjoys salvation he will never be able to attribute it to anything but the pure mercy of God.

Verse 32 falls in line with the two preceding verses in the following way:—

Verse 30. (a) disobedience (Jew and Gentile), (b) mercy (Gentile);

Verse 31. (a) disobedience (Jew), (b) Mercy (Jew and Gentile);

Verse 32. (a) disobedience (Jew and Gentile), (b) Mercy (Jew and Gentile).

(3) *Verses* 33-36. Paul's closing doxology may be set out in stanza form as follows:—

O the depths of the riches,
  Both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God!
How unsearchable are His judgments,
  And His ways past tracing out!
For who hath known the mind of the Lord?
  Or who hath been His counsellor?
Or who hath first given to Him,
  And it shall be recompensed unto Him again?
For of Him, and through Him, and unto Him are all things.
  To Him be the glory for ever. Amen.

This consists of three parts: (1) *verse* 33, the incomprehensibility of God's wisdom and knowledge and ways, (2) *verses* 34-35, His independence of all creatures, (3) *verse* 36, His relation to creation, and the glory due to Him.

The four verses may be set out antithetically, in chiastic or crosswise order, as follows:—

(a) O the depth
(b) of the riches,
(c) both of the wisdom
(d) and the knowledge of God!
(e) How unsearchable are His judgments,

(e) and His ways past tracing out!
(d) For who hath known the mind of the Lord?
(c) Or who hath been His counsellor?
(b) Or who hath first given to Him and it shall be recompensed to Him again?

(a) For of Him and through Him and unto Him are all things. To Him be the glory for ever. Amen.

The innermost pair, (e) (e), correspond in the expressions "unsearchable" and "past tracing out"; the next, (d) (d), in "knowledge" and "mind"; the next, (c) (c), in "wisdom" and "counsellor"; (b) and (b) in God's "riches" and the impossibility of enriching Him. In (a) and (a) the opening exclamation, as to the "depth" of God's riches, wisdom and knowledge, finds its counterpart in the closing statement as to His infinitude.

DIVISION V.

PRACTICAL CHRISTIAN LIFE.

CHAPTERS 12. 1—15. 13.

The Apostle now brings to bear upon the practical life of the believer the subjects he has been handling in the first eleven chapters. The various exhortations which follow issue from, and are dependent upon, the doctrine already given. Doctrine determines duty. Christian practice is inseparably related to Christian truth. The purpose of truth is holiness. The Apostle shows what is to be the effect of the Gospel on the believer, his mind, his body, and his various relationships. Divine mercies involve human responsibilities. The distinction between what is doctrinal and what is practical is sometimes made, but while the distinction is serviceable, we need to remember that what is hortatory is likewise doctrinal.

The whole section is from 12. 1, to 15. 13, and may be divided in the following way:—

(1) Chap. 12. 1, 2, responsibility towards God.
(2) „ 12. 3, responsibility towards self.
(3) „ 12. 4-8, responsibility towards the Church.
(4) „ 12. 9-13, responsibility towards fellow-believers.

(5) Chap. 12. 14-21, responsibility towards the world.
(6) „ 13. 1-7, responsibility towards the State.
(7) „ 13. 8-14, responsibility towards neighbours.
(8) „ 14. 1—15. 4, mutual responsibilities of the weak and the strong.
(9) „ 15. 5-13, mutual responsibilities of all believers.

Chapter 12 may be viewed under the following headings :—

(1) Verses 1, 2, conformity to God's will.
(2) „ 3-13, communion with saints.
(3) „ 14-21, conduct towards fellow men.

Alternatively we may adopt the following divisions :

(1) Verses 1, 2, how to prove the will of God.
(2) „ 3-8, how to exercise spiritual gifts.
(3) „ 9-21, how to manifest love.

Again,

(1) Verses 1, 2, gifts to God.
(2) „ 3-8, gifts from God.
(3) „ 9-21, gifts to one another.

Again,

(1) Verses 1, 2, individual life.
(2) „ 3-8, church life.
(3) „ 9-21, social life.

The Apostle first mentions the natural body, the individual, which is to be presented to God (verse 1); then the spiritual body, the corporate (verse 5).

CHAPTER XII.

Prominence is given to the effects of God's mercies upon the mind of the believer. There is:—

(1) The renewed mind (verse 2).
(2) „ sober mind (verse 3).
(3) „ harmonious mind (verse 15).
(4) „ lowly mind (verse 16).
(5) „ provident mind (verse 17).

We will now take the various sections:

Section (1) 12. 1, 2,

Responsibility towards God.

In *verse* 1 the Apostle begins with duty toward God, and this consists of:—

(1) The outward activity of the body in service to God, (2) the inward impulses of the mind in proving the will of God. These verses give the basic exhortations which govern all the duties subsequently mentioned. A life regulated towards God results in a life regulated toward man. The exhortation, which is immediately based upon the mercies of God, is that we should present our bodies "a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is our reasonable service."

The presentation is to be (1) *complete* (this is indicated by the tense of the verb "present," in the original); (2) *constant* ("a living sacrifice"); (3) *consecrated* ("holy," *i.e.*, free from blemish and set apart to God); (4) *consistent* with God's will ("acceptable," i.e., well-pleasing, "to God"); (5) *consistent*

with the spiritual intelligence of those who are new creatures in Christ (a "reasonable," or intelligent, "service"). The contrast to the sacrifices under the Law is obvious. They were (1) the slain bodies of animals, (2) offered by ritual and under compulsion. The presentation of the body of the believer involves the voluntary rendering of his whole being and his whole life. The service is a *latreia,* or service of worship; cf. 1. 9, and 9. 4.

The exhortations in *verse* 2 are (1) negative and (2) positive: (1) non-conformity to the world, (2) transformation into the Divine likeness. Worldliness and godliness are mutually antagonistic. There is no middle course. The world, or age, *aiōn,* here is the condition of humanity, which, since the Fall, is in spiritual darkness, with tendencies and influences which are controlled by the powers of darkness in opposition to God. Conformity thereto is to that which is transient and doomed. The contrasting transfiguration is to that which endures for ever. The Apostle John similarly contrasts the world with the will of God (1 John 2. 17).

Paul states two things regarding this process of transfiguration: (1) the *means,* (2) the *purpose.* (1) the means is the renewing of the mind, the adjustment of the moral and spiritual vision to the mind of God; (2) the *purpose* is that we may "prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God." To prove is to test or

discern, with the effect of approving. Either the words "good" and "acceptable" and "perfect" may be regarded as descriptive of the will of God, or, and perhaps preferably, we may render by "what is the will of God, what is good, and acceptable and perfect"—"good," because of its effects upon ourselves and others; "acceptable" (or well-pleasing, as in verse 1) in God's sight; "perfect," as being conditioned by maturity in Divine things.

Section (2) 12. 3.

Responsibility towards Self.

The Apostle now gives the reason for the exhortations he has just expressed in verses 1 and 2. At the same time the exhortation in this third verse is introductory to the passage that follows, in which the individual believer is seen to be one of a corporate community. Paul attributes the authority of his injunctions not to his calling but to the grace given to him. He here speaks, that is to say, not so much as an apostle, though that is involved, but as a servant of God who had been a partaker of like grace with his readers.

Each believer is "not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but so to think as to think soberly." The phrase "to think soberly" represents one word in the original, and suggests a play on the word "to think" in the former part of the verse.

We could perhaps render the clause somewhat literally by "so to be minded as to be safe-minded." A right estimate of oneself will always be a humble estimate, and will be formed in the realisation that whatever we are and whatever we do that is pleasing to God, comes from God, "according as God hath dealt to each man a measure of faith." Faith, which produces right thinking, thereby produces right acting. The measure of one's faith is the measure of his capacity for usefulness.

Section (3) 12. 4-8.

Responsibility towards the Church.

This section consists of two parts: (1) mutual relationship in the mystical body of Christ (*verses* 4, 5); (2) differing gifts in exercise (*verses* 6-8).

(1) The first part consists of (a), *illustration* (*verse* 4); (b) *application* (*verse* 5). The illustration is that of the human body and its members; the application concerns believers as members one of another in Christ. The figure suggests the most intimate connection possible. "We who are many, are one body in Christ." The unity is due, not to external organisation, but to a common and vital union in Christ, common because all are in Christ, vital because we are "severally members one of another." Corporate unity involves mutual responsibility. Divine unity is

expressed in diversity. Both the unity and the diversity are essential to the effectivity of the body.

(2) Seven different forms of the exercise of gifts are selected, the number seven suggesting harmony. They are (a) *prophesying* (which signifies telling forth the mind of the Lord); (b) *ministry, diakonia* (voluntary service); (c) *teaching* (distinct from prophesying, cf. 1 Cor. 12. 28, 29, and addressed to the understanding); (d) *exhorting* (often coupled with teaching, cf. 1 Tim. 4. 12; 6. 2, and addressed to the conscience); (e) *giving* (the word in the original suggests sharing with others); (f) *ruling* (literally, standing before, *i.e.*, taking the lead, see 1 Thess. 5. 12, and cf. 1 Tim. 5. 17); (g) *showing mercy* (*i.e.*, relieving distress).

(a) Prophecy was to be exercised "according to the proportion (or measure) of faith" (cf. verse 3), not with display or self-seeking. This meaning, rather than "the analogy of the faith," is in keeping with the context; (b) he who engages in ministry, or service, is to wait thereon, *i.e.*, to attend to it carefully, to give himself diligently to it (cf. 1 Tim. 4. 15); similarly with (c) teaching and (d) exhorting; (e) giving is to be done with liberality, see also Matt. 6. 3; 9. 21; (f) those who take the lead are to do so with earnest attention to their duty; (g) deeds of mercy are to be done in a spirit of cheerfulness (literally, hilarity) which indicates joy and gladness in the service and its effects.

Section (4) 12. 9-13.

Responsibility towards Fellow-believers.

The Apostle passes now from the subject of the exercise of spiritual gifts in the churches to individual responsibilities in general. This and the next section are closely associated, but in this the exhortations have to do more particularly, though not entirely, with the duties of Christians one towards another, while in the following the subject is more especially that of duties towards the world. There is no formal division, nor is there any artificial order in the injunctions. Each one suggests another.

Love is put first. The exhortation comes as a suitable transition from those just preceding, and at the same time it forms a heading to all that follow, to the end of the chapter, love being the controlling element in all. Grammatically those exhortations which immediately follow are closely associated with it, down to and including verse 14. Thus we may render more closely to the original, " Let love be without hypocrisy, abhorring that which is evil, cleaving to that which is good; in love of the brethren being tenderly affectioned one to another, in honour preferring one another."

" Abhoring that which is evil, cleaving to that which is good," is explanatory of the way in which love is to be void of hypocrisy. Love that makes no discrimination between good and evil is merely sentimental

and worthless. To hate what is bad without cleaving to what is good begets censoriousness. There seems to be no adequate reason for taking the words "good" and "evil" here as simply meaning what is injurious and what is unkind. The exhortation in this verse applies to love to our fellow-men, and not merely to believers. In verse 10 the exhortation is limited to love to our fellow Christians. This is clear from the emphasis given to "in love of the brethren" (see R.V.). "Tenderly affectioned" represents a word specially applied to the love of family members one toward another. "In honour preferring one another," probably means being more ready to give honour than to receive it, or to make the way for another to be honoured rather than to claim honour for oneself.

The three exhortations in *verse* 11, "*in diligence, not slothful: fervent in spirit; serving the Lord,*" are to be connected closely. The first might be rendered "not flagging in zeal." Constant zeal and fervency of spirit are to characterise the Lord's service. Zeal must be controlled by prudence, and exercised not for self-interest but for Christ. Devotion to the Lord is to be the motive inspiring zeal and fervour and directing the activities of the love to which we are exhorted in verse 9.

The next three are likewise closely associated: "*rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing steadfastly in prayer.*" As in the preceding verse, the last

of these three clauses governs the two which go before it. Perseverance in prayer produces joy in hope and patience in tribulation. In the original the article occurs before each noun, but is not to be pressed, as if indicating a special tribulation or hope, though the hope is necessarily that of the Lord's Coming and its issues. Communion with God is essential as a controlling influence in our joy and in our patience under trial. Otherwise joy may be mere ebullition of feeling and patience mere Stoicism.

In *verse* 13, the Apostle reverts to relationships with other believers as in verse 10, the exhortations in the two intervening verses being occupied with the individual believer himself. The two in verse 13 deal with ministering to the needs of others: "*communicating to the necessities of the saints; given to hospitality.*" The word rendered "communicating" denotes having in common, and so implies sharing with others that which we have, so that their needs may be supplied. The word rendered "given to" is, literally, "pursuing," that is to say, earnestly seeking opportunities of hospitality rather than waiting for the occasion to arise. These exhortations also give direction to the love inculcated in verse 10. Compare similar exhortations in Hebrews 13. 1 and 16.

The first command in verse 9 may be taken as a heading to the twelve that follow to the end of verse 13.

CHAPTER XII.

Section (5) 12. 14-21.

Responsibility towards the World.

As we have pointed out above, there is no sharp distinction between the following section and that which has preceded. But the exhortations now given have largely to do with the attitude of believers towards those who are without, and particularly towards persecutors and enemies in general.

In the exhortation in *verse* 14, "*Bless them which persecute you,*" the word rendered "persecute" is the same as that rendered "given to" (or pursuing) in the immediately preceding injunction in verse 13. The two are purposely set antithetically. The believer is to pursue a large-hearted spirit of hospitality. On the other hand, he is to wish well to those who pursue him with hatred and animosity. It is not sufficient to abstain from retaliation against those who do us injury; we must take pains to seek their welfare.

The exhortations in this section are to some extent parallel to those in the Sermon on the Mount, which was designed by the Lord to be applicable in the present age as well as in the time when He was on earth. See Matt. 5. 44 and cf. 6. 28.

Verses 15. 16, are grammatically united, and might be rendered, "*Rejoice with them that rejoice, weep with them that weep, minding the same thing one toward another; not minding lofty things, but being led along with the lowly.*" In rejoicing with them that rejoice

and weeping with them that weep we obey the command to be of the same mind one toward another. The Apostle passes from forgiveness, and answering unkindness with kindness, to the quality of sympathy both with joy and sorrow—not merely absence of selfish interest or even disinterestedness, but that spirit of sharing in the feelings of others which issues from the realisation that we have a common nature, and is at the same time a manifestation of the spirit of Christ. The Gospel narratives afford plentiful illustrations of these precepts in the example set by the Lord Himself. His very first miracle was performed in rejoicing with them that rejoiced, and His greatest miracle while weeping with them that wept. It is, perhaps, more difficult to do the former than the latter. Again, the pride and ambition involved in setting our mind on high things is a hindrance to the unanimity which finds its expression in practical sympathy.

"Condescend" is not the most suitable rendering of the original, which rather denotes "to let oneself be carried along with." It is used in a bad sense in Gal. 2. 13, of Barnabas, and 2 Pet. 3. 17. The most helpful influences over us come from things that are lowly, and the effect of such influences is harmony and peace. The next injunction, "*Be not wise in your own conceits,*" forms the climax to the preceding exhortations of this verse. Being wise in our own conceits is one of the great hindrances to concord among the saints.

The precept in *verse* 17, "*Render to no man evil for evil,*" is identical with the teaching in Matt. 5. 38-48. In Plato's dialogue on "The Republic" the Greek philosopher Socrates discusses the same subject, and asks the question, "Is it the act of a just man to hurt anybody?" and the conclusion is arrived at that "In no instance is it just to injure anyone." The idea that it is just to help our friends and hurt our enemies is attributed to tyrants whose riches give them a fancied or real power. How near did the heathen philosopher approach to the tenets of Christianity!

The next precept, "*Take thought* (literally, "*taking thought*") *for things honourable in the sight of all men,*" is closely connected with this, though it is of general application. For in "taking thought for things honourable in the sight of all men" we not only abstain from retaliation against evil, but therein we avoid justifiable suspicion and criticism. The Septuagint of Proverbs 3. 3, 4, is, "let not mercies and faithfulness forsake thee, but bind them about thy neck, and thou shalt find favour in the sight of the Lord and man." The Apostle doubtless has this passage in view (cf. 2 Cor. 8. 20, 21).

The precept in *verse* 18 is again closely connected with what precedes. Literally, it is "*if it be possible, as much as in you lieth, being at peace with all men.*" The exhortation to be at peace with all men is neces-

sarily conditional. The word "you" bears emphasis, and this indicates that the believer is to see that he himself is not responsible for breaking the peace. Peace is a mutual relation possible of breach by either party. The preservation of it does not always lie within the believer's control. Faithfulness to God must never be sacrificed for the sake of peace. On the other hand, we are to see to it that we do not cherish feelings of bitterness and retaliation. The responsibility for discord must never lie at our door. See the similar exhortation in Hebrews 12. 14, 15, and compare the Lord's precepts in Matt. 5. 39-41.

The injunction in *verse* 19, *"avenge not yourselves, beloved, but give place unto wrath,"* continues the subject of those in verses 17 and 18. The immediate connection is best brought out by adopting the literal rendering "avenging not yourselves, beloved." In other words, this indicates one way of living, as much as in us lieth, at peace with all men. The command is plain, and forbids any mode of retaliation.

The exhortation to give place unto wrath has been understood in various ways. We may notice three :—

(1) That the wrath is that of the injured person.

(2) That the wrath is that of the person who injures.

(3) That the wrath is God's.

The first of these would mean that the injured person, instead of indulging his wrath, is to abstain from exercising it and so to let it pass. But the original will hardly bear that meaning, and the idea does not ade-

quately represent the contrast to the injunction "avenge not yourselves."

The second would mean that the injured person is to allow the wrath of his enemy to be expended upon him, and so to make room for its action. This is a possible meaning of the original. It is, moreover, in keeping with the Lord's command, "But I say unto you, Resist not him that is evil: but whosoever smiteth thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also" (Matt. 5. 39). But this explanation does not fit with the context. For, as to what has preceded, the evil inflicted is not necessarily a matter of wrath; injury may be inflicted without actual wrath, and the believer is to abstain from avenging himself against any form of injury. Nor, again, does this interpretation find support from the succeeding context.

The third explanation seems to be the right one. For the Apostle assigns as a reason why the believer is to give place unto wrath instead of avenging himself, that "It is written, Vengeance belongeth unto Me; I will recompense, saith the Lord." Literally, too, the injunction reads, "give place unto the wrath," and though the definite article is not necessarily to be pressed from the grammatical point of view, yet its occurrence here seems to refer purposely to what follows. Moreover the Apostle has constantly spoken of the wrath of God in the preceding part of the Epistle (see 1. 18; 2. 5, 8; 3. 5; 4. 15; 5. 9; 9. 22), and nowhere hitherto has it been mentioned in any

other way. Both retrospectively and prospectively, therefore, the word points to that which it is God's prerogative to exercise. The believer is not to usurp God's authority. Nor does the injunction suggest that he is to desire that the wrath of God shall be inflicted upon his injurer. In giving place to God's wrath he simply leaves the matter to Him who will deal with it according to His perfect wisdom. Compare the Proverb, " Say not thou, I will recompense evil : wait on the Lord, and He shall save thee " (Prov. 20. 22, and see 24. 29).

The quotation is from Deut. 32. 35, which is again quoted in Heb. 10. 30, in an entirely different connection.

In *verse* 20 the Apostle proceeds from the thought of passive abstention from retaliation to that of active beneficence, in returning good for evil : *" But if thine enemy hunger, feed him: if he thirst, give him to drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head."* The quotation in the first part of this is from the Septuagint of Proverbs 25. 20, 21. The exhortations regarding giving food and drink are clearly intended to embrace the widest scope of kindness in general (cf. Matt. 5. 44; Luke 6. 27).

In regard to heaping coals of fire on the head, the meaning which suits the context best seems to be, that by repaying hostility by kindness the hard heart of one's enemy will be subdued to repentance, with resulting manifestation of friendliness. This is borne out by

the injunction in *verse* 21, "*Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.*" If we act in a spirit of vengeance, the grace which should work in our hearts is subdued. That gives a twofold victory to the wrong. If we return good for evil we subdue the antagonism of our foe, and bring him to a better mind. There are, of course, cases where kindness only hardens, but these are exceptional, and are not in view here. The Apostle omits the closing sentence in Prov. 25. 22, "and the Lord shall reward thee": for his exhortations here are occupied, not with rewards, but with response to the mercies of God, and with the exercise of the spirit of love.

The whole of this passage is thus governed, firstly by the initial exhortations of the twelfth chapter, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God"; secondly, by the command in verse 9, "Let love be without hypocrisy," and, thirdly, by that in verse 17, "Render to no man evil for evil."

Section (6) 13. 1-7.

Responsibility towards Rulers.

There does not seem to be any definite connection between this section and what has preceded. Possibly the subject of Divine retribution upon evildoers leads to the similar responsibilities vested in earthly potentates as ministers of God (verse 4). With this in

view the Apostle speaks of the attitude incumbent upon Christians towards those who are in authority over the State. The injunction to be in subjection to the higher powers, while important in every country, would have a special force in Rome, where the Government would rigorously repress any religion which tended to run counter to that of the State, and especially Christianity, for Christians were largely regarded as a Jewish sect, and propaganda considered in any sense to be Jewish would be suspected as being of a revolutionary tendency. There was also a danger, no doubt, that Christians might entertain wrong notions of the Kingdom of Christ and its present relation to the kingdoms of this world. To Jews, conscious of the covenant relationship of their nation to God, there was a natural repugnance to submit to heathen rulers.

The following terms are used in this section to describe State authorities: (1) "*higher powers*" (verse 1), that is, those who bear office, in contradistinction to those who have no official position in the State; (2) "*rulers*" (verse 3), those who exercise governmental authority; (3) "*ministers of God*" (verse 4), acting under Divine providence for the benefit of welldoers and the punishment of evildoers; (4) "*ministers of God's service*" (verse 6), acting as Divinely appointed agents for the discharge of what is necessary for civil order.

The following reasons are given for subjection to the higher powers:

(a) *"There is no power but of God";* civil authority is derived from God.

(b) *"the powers that be are ordained of God"* (*verse* 1); civil authority is arranged by Divine appointment.

In *verses* 2-4, the Apostle draws inferences from these facts.

(1) "He that resisteth the power withstandeth the ordinance of God" (verse 2). Since civil government is God's will and those who exercise it derive their authority from Him, resistance against that authority is disobedience against God.

(2) "They that withstand shall receive to themselves judgment" (verse 2). Whether Divine or human, the Apostle does not specify. Circumstances in which rulers overstep their authority, and in which it becomes necessary for servants of God to say, "We must obey God rather than man," are not in view in this passage. The words in the original, in verses 1, 2, rendered "be in subjection," "ordained," "resisteth," "ordinance," are all associated with the same Greek root, which lends a stress to the idea of order impossible of being expressed in English.

(c) *"Rulers are not a terror to the good work, but to the evil"* (*verse* 3).

Work is mentioned instead of workers because the exercise of authority is determined by men's actions. "Wouldest thou have no fear of the power. Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise from the

same; for he is a minister of God to thee for good." The Divine design of government is again here in view, and not the abuse of authority by tyrants. The believer is called, not to resist, but simply to do good. Thereby also he wins the praise of those who discharge civil functions, and, more than this, experiences God's goodness in providing such authority.

The Apostle now shows the effects of evil doing: "But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is a minister of God, an avenger for wrath to him that doeth evil." The sword is the emblem of the power of life and death. This verse vindicates the rights of capital punishment, though at the same time it embraces the carrying out of any form of judicial sentence. The statement, "he is a minister of God," is repeated in order to set in greater contrast the effects of doing good and of doing evil, and to stress the fact of Divine appointment and control; "for wrath" is set in contrast to "for good."

(d) *"Not only because of the wrath but also for conscience' sake" (verse* 5).

The former is external, the execution of judgment on the part of the ruler; the latter is internal, a matter of conscience towards God. We are ever directed to view earthly relationships and circumstances in the light of our relationships with God. (See, for instance, 1 Cor. 10. 21; Eph. 5. 22, 25; 6. 1-4, 5, 9). *Verse* 6 illustrates this, giving at the same time an

inference from what has just been said regarding civil authority: "For, for this cause ye pay tribute also; for they are ministers of God's service, attending continually upon this very thing." Conscience is to be in exercise in this respect, in that rulers are God's appointed agents for the maintenance of civil authority. By being in subjection to them, and paying tribute, we recognise the ordinance of God, and so do honour to Him. The word *leitourgoi,* rendered "ministers of God's service," differs from that in verse 4, where *diakonos* was used. The *leitourgos* among the Greeks was a public servant appointed for any work, civil or religious. This word lays stress here upon the fact that the service is rendered to God on behalf of the people. The word rendered "attending continually" is the same as that rendered "continuing steadfastly" in 12. 12. "Upon this very thing" has been taken by some to refer to the exacting of tribute, by others to the service of God. Probably both are in view, for they are regarded as definitely connected.

In *verse* 7 the Apostle closes this section by quoting an exhortation with reference to all who are under authority. "*Render,*" he says, "*to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due*" — tribute was any direct tax laid either on persons or on real property; "*custom to whom custom;*"—the custom was an indirect tax on goods. Both kinds of tax were paid to the Roman Government through the *publicani,* the agents who collected them, and who were bitterly

hated. It was a constant practice to stir up plots against them, and revolutions against the whole system. Abuses on the part of the tax-collectors were so great that a little later than the date of this Epistle, Nero laid proposals before the Roman Senate for stringent reforms; "*fear to whom fear;*"—the attitude due towards one who is an appointed avenger of evil doing; "*honour to whom honour.*"—here the Apostle, while immediately speaking of what is due to those in authority, perhaps suggests at the same time what is inculcated elsewhere, namely, the duty of individuals one toward another.

Section (7) 13. 8-14.

Responsibilities towards Neighbours.

The command in *verse* 8, "*owe no man anything, save to love one another,*" follows on in connection with that of the beginning of verse 7, "render to all their due," but the exhortation widens out to the subject of love, which in all ways seeks the best interests of others. Here, while the interests of the creditor are in view, the precept is not limited to that; all obligations are to be discharged, including those mentioned in verse 7. The debt of love, however, is always owing. Any payment made in this respect does not release us from further indebtedness. Do what we may for our neighbour, we are to love him. This is now enforced by two considerations: (1) that

love fulfils the Law of God (*verses* 9, 10); (2) the time is short (*verses* 11-14).

(1) "*for he that loveth his neighbour hath fulfilled the Law*"—literally "has fulfilled law." The Mosaic Law is in view, but rather in the sense that it expresses the general principle of right and wrong. For the Apostle specifies some of the commandments of the Law of Moses as in the order found in the Septuagint of Deut. 25., without making a complete enumeration, and cuts short the list by saying, "and if there be any other commandment, it is summed up in this word, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." The commandments mentioned in *verse* 9 are thus given as specimens of the whole Law. He who loves his neighbour has fulfilled all the commandments contained therein, and has carried out in action the whole principle of law.

Paul and James express the same thing concerning the Law, but in different ways (see Jas. 2. 9-11). The former says that in keeping the one commandment we are keeping all, the latter that in breaking any one we break all. Each therefore stresses the unity of the Law*

The commandment "*Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*" (a) occurs in Lev. 19. 18, as a summary of a number of precepts; (b) is quoted by the Lord in Matt. 22. 39; Mark 12. 30; Luke 10. 27, in asso-

* See Expository Notes on the Epistle to the Galatians by Hogg and Vine, pp. 117, 252.

ciation with the first commandment of the Law, as given in Deut. 6., the two being those upon which "hang all the Law and the prophets"; (c) is quoted by Paul in Gal. 5. 14, where the double idea is conveyed, (1) that this single precept expresses all that the Law conveys, and (2) that to obey this one precept is to fulfil the whole Law; (d) is quoted and amplified in the present passage, and here the Apostle states separately the same two ideas, (1) in verse 9, (2) in verse 10; (e) is quoted by James (2. 8), who argues that the unity of the Law is the effect of the unity of the Law-giver, being the expression of a single Will (verses 11, and 4. 12).

Verse 10 runs parallel to verse 8, but puts the first part negatively; "*Love worketh no ill to his neighbour.*" Love is personified, as in 1 Cor. 13. Moving us to do good to others, it likewise keeps us from doing them harm. "*Love therefore is the fulfilment of the Law.*" Again the article is absent in the original, and we might render accordingly "love is the fulfilment of law." Verses 9 and 10 may be compared as follows: love covers the whole scope of the Law (verse 9), and is the fulfilment of it (verse 10). Or, again, love runs through its precepts (verse 9), and carries them into effect (verse 10).

(2) An additional motive for fulfilling the injunctions in verse 8 is now given in *verse* 11, namely, the brevity of the time prior to the Lord's Second Com-

ing: "*And this,*" *i.e.,* owing nothing but love and so fulfilling the Law, "*knowing the season, that now it is high time for you to awake out of sleep: for now is salvation nearer to us than when we first believed.*"

"*Knowing the season*" signifies "being fully aware of the significance of the present time." Cf. the same word, *kairos,* season, in 3. 26; 5. 6; 8. 18; 9. 9; 11. 5; it denotes a time characterised by some special feature, here the imminence of the Lord's return; "*that now,*" *i.e.,* "already," there must be no delay; "*it is high time,*" lit., "it is the hour" suggesting brevity; "*to awake,*" the tense of the original signifies "to awake at once"; "*out of sleep,*" *hupnos,* here only, in the New Testament, of spiritual lethargy. For a comparison see Matt. 24. 42, 43; Eph. 5. 14; 1 Thess. 5. 6. For a contrast in circumstances see Matt. 26. 46; "*for now,*" a different word from that in the former part of the verse, and denoting "at this very time."

The Apostle progressively narrows his expressions of time to a climax—(a) "the season" (the whole era), (b) "high time," lit., "hour" (the present hour), (c) "now" (the immediate moment); "*is salvation,*" *i.e.,* deliverance from present conditions and from the coming wrath, at the return of the Lord for the Church; see 5. 9, and cf. 1 Thess. 5. 9, and 1 Pet. 1. 5, 13; "*nearer to us than when we first believed*" —the Apostles were ever consistent in their instruction concerning the Lord's return as an event to be

regarded as imminent. Discussions as to whether any of them changed their view as to its imminence, or whether they were mistaken, are entirely beside the mark. The exhortations they gave were designed for the saints throughout the present era. To wait for the Son of God from heaven not only was the actual attitude of the church of the Thessalonians, their example was to be followed by all believers in each generation till the event transpires.

The opening words of *verse* 12, "*The night is far spent, and the day is at hand,*" repeat in another form what has been said in the latter part of verse 11, and continue the metaphor of the first part of that verse. "The night" signifies the whole period of man's alienation from God; cf. 1 Thess. 5. 5, 7. The verb rendered "is far spent" is not to be pressed into its literal translation "was far spent," as if it referred to the First Advent; the tense is equivalent to a perfect; the word *prokoptō* denotes "to strike forward," and so "to make progress" (cf. Gal. 1. 14), and the meaning is, "has far advanced." "The day" is "the day of Christ," to be introduced when the Lord comes to receive His saints to Himself; "is at hand" is literally "has drawn near."

The believer, having been called out of darkness into God's "marvellous light" (1 Pet. 2. 9; cf. 1 Thess. 5. 4, 5), is delivered from "the power of darkness" (Col. 1. 13), in other words, from "the world

rulers of this darkness" (Eph. 6. 12). To hate one's brother is to walk in darkness (1 John 2. 9, 11) and with such a condition fellowship with God is incompatible (1 John 1. 6). Again, the believer is to have "no fellowship with darkness" (2 Cor. 6. 14; Eph. 5. 11).

Being yet in the night season, however, he is involved in conflict, and victory can only be gained by putting on "the armour (literally 'weapons') of light." The tense of the verbs "put off" and "put on" suggest immediate decision and completeness.

In *verse* 13, the exhortation, *"let us walk honestly"* (or rather, "becomingly") expresses the practical result of obeying the two injunctions in verse 12.

We are to walk *"as in the day," i.e.,* as one walks in the day, and so, as those who spiritually belong to the day, when we shall be like Christ and shall see Him as He is (1 John 3. 2). Cf. "As children of light" (Eph. 5. 18).

Verses 12 *and* 14 run parallel to the two preceding exhortations. *"Let us walk honestly . . . not in revelling and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and jealousy,"* corresponds to *"let us therefore cast off the works of darkness."* *"Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ"* corresponds to *"let us put on the armour of light."* The believer is so to apprehend the true meaning of the union with Christ into which he entered when he put on Christ (Gal. 3. 27, cf. Rom. 6. 3); Christ becomes the ele-

ment in which he lives, the moral raiment which displays His character.

The Christian is to put on:

(a) *the Person*:—the Lord Jesus Christ, Rom. 13. 14.

(b) *the nature*:—the new man, Eph. 4. 24, Col. 3. 10.

(c) *metaphorically*:

(1) the whole armour of God, Eph. 6. 11.

(2) the breastplate of righteousness, Eph. 6. 14.

(3) the armour of light, Rom. 13. 12.

(4) the breastplate of faith and love, 1 Thess. 5. 8.

(5) the hope of salvation, as a helmet, cf. Eph. 6. 17.

(d) *as qualities*:

(1) a heart of compassion, Col. 3. 12.
(2) kindness ,,
(3) humility ,,
(4) meekness ,,
(5) longsuffering, with forgiveness ,,
(6) love Col. 3. 14.

"*And make not provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof*"—is, literally, "take not forethought," etc. Contrast 12. 17, and compare 6. 12. This negative command corresponds to the positive exhortation to "mortify the deeds of the body," 8. 13. Expressed as it is here it suggests the self-will with which sin is premeditated.

The flesh is, here, the seat of sin in man. Cf. Col. 2. 23; 2 Pet. 2. 18; 1 John 2. 16.

The two precepts of this verse are to one another very much as cause and effect. Putting on the Lord Jesus Christ, the believer finds power to abstain from forming designs for the gratification of sensual desires.

Believers are to fulfil :—

(1) the ordinance (or requirement) of the Law (Rom. 8. 11; 13. 8).

(2) apostolic teaching (2 Cor. 10. 6).

(3) the joy of those who have their spiritual interests at heart (Phil. 2. 2).

(4) the service they receive in the Lord (Col. 4. 17).

(5) the works committed to them by God (Rev. 3. 3).

Section (8) 14. 1—15.4.

Mutual Responsibilities of the Weak and the Strong.

This section may be suitably divided into three parts, under the following headings :—

(a) *Mutual toleration, and the Lordship of Christ* (14. 1-12).

(b) *Mutual care, and service to Christ* (14. 13-23).

(c) *Mutual advantage, and the example of Christ* (15. 1-4).

(1) In *verses* 1-12 the Apostle deals with the moral responsibilities of the strong brother toward the weak, and of the weak toward the strong. The stronger are not to set at nought the weak; the weak are not to judge the strong. The mutual relations are to be viewed in the light of the Lordship of Christ over each, and of His Judgment Seat.

(2) In *verses* 13-23 he passes to the positive aspect, the responsibility of exercising care the one for the other, as those who are servants of Christ.

(3) In *verses* 15. 1-4 he urges the support of the weak, and passes to the broader view of seeking one another's best interests. He now sets the whole subject in the light of the example of Christ, with special reference to the design of the Old Testament Scriptures in this respect.

Three points call for consideration :—

(a) The connection with what has preceded in chapters 12 and 13.

(b) The meaning of the terms "weak" and "strong."

(c) The immediate problems confronting the converts.

(a) (1) In the preceding chapters the need of mutual love has been stressed (12. 9, 10; 13. 8-10, *e.g.*). This is now made to govern the particular subject of the relations between the weak and the strong. (2) At the end of the preceding chapter attention has been drawn to the imminence of the Day of Christ. Accord-

ingly the strong and the weak are to remember that all have to appear before the Judgment Seat, a tribunal to be set up in that Day (14. 10). (3) The Apostle has been giving injunctions against the indulgence of the flesh. This is now applied to the need of abstaining, on the one hand, from the abuse of liberty, and, on the other hand, from the indulgence of a critical and censorious spirit, in things morally indifferent. (4) The injunction to put on the Lord Jesus Christ (13. 14) influences the new subject in a twofold way: firstly in the emphasis placed on the Lordship of Christ (14. 6-9), secondly, in the presentation of Christ as the Pattern for believers (15. 1-4).

(b) As to the significance of the terms "weak" and "strong," he who is weak in faith is so through lack of an apprehension of the liberty into which one is brought who, trusting in Christ alone, is delivered from all bondage and finds freedom in serving the will of Christ as Lord of the life. The weakness is the effect of scruples about details that lie outside the scope of those things which the Christian faith demands. His danger is that of judging the brother who is strong, and of a liability to take offence. The "strong" is one who, while acting conscientiously toward God, is not fettered by scruples of that sort. His danger is twofold, namely, of despising the weak brother, and of setting a stumbling block before him.

(c) The problems with which the Apostle deals differ from that form of legalism which he combats

in the Epistle to the Galatians. There the whole question had to do with the means of justification before God. Here, as in 1 Cor. 8., the question relates to the way in which one who is justified should act under certain circumstances. These have to do, not with matters of known and recognised moral obliquity, but with partaking of, or abstention from, certain forms of food, and with the observance of days. In the Galatians and Colossian Epistles, the warning is against false brethren, and the effects of their inroads upon the churches. In Romans and 1 Corinthians false brethren are not in view; the warning is to brethren who are genuinely such, and the danger is lack of unity through differences of opinion.

We will take the three sections in greater detail.

(a) "*Mutual toleration, and the Lordship of Christ*" (14. 1-12).

In *verse* 1, "*But him that is weak in faith receive ye, yet not to doubtful disputations,*" the "But" shows that there is a definite connection with what has preceded. The weakness is "in faith," not "in the faith," as in the A.V. Though the article is present in the original, it does not here signify the faith, the body of Christian doctrine. The article is not always to be pressed into a literal translation. The context is the great guide, and here it decides the meaning, for the Apostle goes on to say that "one man hath faith to eat" (verse 2), and again, "the faith which thou hast, have it to thyself before God,

. . . he that eateth is condemned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith; and whatsoever is not of faith is sin" (verses 22, 23).

The form of the word rendered "weak" suggests that the trouble is not an inherent characteristic, but a condition into which a brother has been brought by outward influence. The form of the word rendered "received" indicates that the attitude adopted in receiving is to be continued. The word itself suggests a hearty reception, a welcome.

The marginal alternative "not for decision of doubts," signifies "not so as to pass judgment on reasonings." The reception is to be unreserved; there is to be no setting up of oneself as a judge of the weak brother's scruples.

Verse 2 gives a particular case, the first of two, which called forth the general precept in verse 1: "*One man hath faith to eat all things: but he that is weak eateth herbs.*" In the case of the former his faith enables him to eat anything without fear of defilement (Cf. Mark 7. 15). The latter has scruples which impose abstinence from all meat or from wine. Reference is not merely to abstention from unclean animals, or from meats offered to idols, as in 1 Cor. 8., but from all meat. The Apostle expresses no disapproval in either case. The right or wrong of the matter is left an open question. He is concerned with the unkindly feelings involved. The strong are not to despise the weak, imputing superstition and narrow-

mindedness to them; the weak are not to judge the strong as being unscrupulous.

The appeal is now continued, at the end of *verse* 3 and in *verse* 4, to the weak brother on behalf of the strong. In verses 10 to 23, the appeal is urged to the strong brother on behalf of the weak. The reason assigned against judging a strong brother is that "God hath received him." Accordingly, that he partakes of meat does not argue against his acceptance with God.

A second ground of appeal is given in *verse* 4, namely, that the strong brother is the servant of Another, *i.e.*, of God, and that he stands or falls according to the judgment, not of the weak brother, but of his own Lord. It is presumption to pass sentence of condemnation upon a liberty which God has not condemned. The terms "stand" or "fall" might be understood either (1) of acquittal or (2) the standing upright or falling into sin in using liberty, and that is a case that is to be judged by his own Lord and not by the weak brother.

This second meaning would seem to be the one intended, in view of the Apostle's statement, "*Yea, he shall be made to stand; for the Lord hath power to make him stand,*" that is to say, since what he does is a matter of faith (verse 2), he shall be maintained in his integrity through the strength of his Lord. That the rendering "the Lord" is correct here, and not "God" as in A.V., has not only the support of MS

evidence, but also of the context. That Christ is regarded as the Lord of His servants in this passage, is clear from verse 9. The word rendered "servant" is not *doulos*, which denotes a slave, but *oiketēs*, which denotes "household servant," one who was in closer association with the family, as in Luke 16. 13; Acts 10. 7; and 1 Peter 2. 18. What Paul opposes here, then, is not scrupulousness itself, but scrupulousness which produces Pharisaism; on the other hand he clearly intimates that the enjoyment of liberty is only morally successful through the grace and power of Christ as the Lord of His servants.

In *verse* 5 the Apostle takes up a second instance of what might easily lead to "doubtful disputations," namely, that of observing days, and couples with it a repeated reference to the subject of eating: "*One man esteemeth one day above another; another esteemeth every day.*" The observance of days has reference to the Jewish Sabbath and other days, as mentioned in Col. 2. 16; cf. Gal. 4. 10. It is the weak brother who esteems these as necessary to be regarded with strict observance. The strong brother esteems every day. The word "alike" is not part of the original and should be omitted. It does not help the sense of the statement. The Apostle does not suggest, of course, that the strong brother is one who regards every day as a day upon which he can act as he likes, but rather that he is one who regards every day as consecrated to the Lord, and to be spent for Him;

just as he regards meat and herbs as legitimate for consumption.

The word rendered "esteem" is the same as that rendered "judge" in verses 3 and 4, but has a different meaning here. There is was a matter of passing sentence of condemnation; here it is that of judging or regarding a day in a certain light.

The exhortation *"Let each man be fully assured in his own mind,"* signifies that one's convictions are to be one's own, through an apprehension of responsibility to the Lord and to His revealed will. The believer's action should not be determined simply by another man's opinion. The mind is the seat of moral consciousness and this, when enlightened by the Spirit of God, enables the believer to do His will, and prevents the demoralising experience of doing something merely because others think it right. For the term "fully assured," see 4. 21, and cf. Col. 2. 2; 1 Thess. 1. 5; Heb. 6. 11 and 10. 22.

In *verse* 6 the second statement in the A.V., "and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it," does not rest on good manuscript evidence, and does not suit the Apostle's argument. He has no intention of suggesting that any day should not be observed as set apart to God. The difference does not lie in that the strong brother has no regard for a particular day, but that he attaches value to every day, whereas the weak brother attaches a special value to certain days.

In the matter, however, of eating meat or abstaining, the Apostle does insist that in either case the course is adopted as to the Lord: "*He that eateth, eateth unto the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, unto the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.*" Just as the weak brother, who regards one day above others, may meet criticism by saying that he observes the day to the Lord, so may the brother who eats all things maintain that what he partakes of begets gratitude to God on his part; he could not give thanks for what he knew God had forbidden. Again, just as he who eats evinces his devotion to the Lord by giving thanks, so he who refrains evinces the same thing by his thankfulness for his simpler fare. Each regards himself as acting in responsibility to the Lord and in accordance with His will.

In this 6th verse the emphasis is on the Lordship of Christ. In verses 7 to 9 the subject passes from the particular cases of those who regard special days, and those who eat flesh and those who abstain, to the case of every believer and his relationship with Christ as Lord. The reference now is to the daily Christian experience. The development of his argument is as follows:—

(1) Negative: The believer is not his own: "*For none of us liveth to himself and none dieth to himself.*"

(2) Positive: The believer belongs to the Lord: "*For whether we live we live unto the Lord; or whether we die we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.*"

(3) The basis of the relationship is the Death and Resurrection of Christ: "*For to this end Christ died and lived again, that He might be Lord of both the dead and the living.*" The general principle stated in verses 7 and 8 does not refer to the effect of a person's conduct on other people. While true in that respect, it signifies especially that a believer's end in life is not his own will and interest but the Lord's. So with his death, he chooses neither the time nor the manner of it, nor does death itself alter the relationship. He still remains the Lord's possession, and lives to Him. These are determined by the Lord's will. Believers may differ in their opinions as to what the Lord requires of them individually in certain matters, but the deciding principle in every case and every circumstance is the Lordship of Christ.

Verse 9 states two great facts upon which Christ's right of possession is founded, namely, His Death and Resurrection. The relationship both in this life and in the next is established upon Christ's redemptive work. The exalted position which Christ holds is not only the result of His Death and Resurrection, it was the purpose in view. Cf. Acts 2. 36.

In the earlier part of the Epistle the Death and Resurrection of Christ were shown to be the basis:—

(1) of our justification (5. 25);
(2) of our salvation from coming wrath (5. 6-10).
(3) of that which God has provided for us in Christ (8. 32-39).

Here they are seen to be the basis

(4) of His Lordship over His people.

For here the Apostle is speaking of the necessity that believers should abstain from judging one another, and thus from usurping the authority of Christ, an authority exercised both here and hereafter. The order "the dead and the living" corresponds to the order "Christ died and lived again."

In 1 Thess. 4. 14, the Death and Resurrection of Christ are shown to be the basis of the reunion of believers, the dead and the living, at the Rapture, and in that passage His Death and Resurrection are associated with His Name Jesus. There the message is one of comfort; here, where the subject in view is His Lordship, the title used is "Christ."

In the 4th verse the question was asked, "Who art thou that judgest the servant of another?" "The servant of another" forms the subject of verses 4 to 9; "Who art thou that judgest?" forms the subject of *verses* 10-12.

Since Christ is Lord of all, the weak has no right to judge the strong, nor the strong to set at nought the weak, "*For we shall all stand before the Judgment Seat of God.*" This, then, answers the question, "Who art Thou?" "The Judgment Seat of God" is un-

doubtedly the right reading here. The Judgment Seat of Christ (2 Cor. 5. 10) is thereby that of God. "The Father . . . has given all judgment unto the Son . . . and He gave Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man" (John 5. 22, 27).

Verse 11 confirms this by a free quotation from the Septuagint of Isa. 45. 23, a passage which speaks of the establishment of God's Kingdom in the earth. Here it is made to include the prior event at God's tribunal in Heaven, where believers are each one to give an account of himself. Both the Hebrew and the Septuagint have "By Myself have I sworn," a Divine oath also uttered in the case of Abraham, Gen. 22. 16. The Apostle gives the equivalent expression "as I live" (cf. Num. 14. 21, 28; Deut. 32. 40, R.V.), a form of oath expressive of Divine power and authority.

In Phil. 2. 10, 11, the similar statement includes not only the willing recognition of the authority and power of Christ and the accuracy of His judgment of believers, but a similar acknowledgment at a later time on the part of all those who have resisted His claim. The bowing of the knee is expressive of the recognition of, and subjection to, the Lord's authority; the confession of the tongue indicates the acknowledgment of the inerrancy and rightfulness of His judgment (verse 12).

Verse 12 gives an inference from the preceding quotation: "*So then each one of us shall give an account*

of himself to God." In the original the two phrases "each one of us" and "of himself" are put together, thus giving emphasis to the argument against judging one another, and introducing verse 13. The emphasis given to the Lordship of Christ (verses 8, 9), and the representation of the Judgment Seat as being that of God (verses 10, 11, 12), provide clear testimony to the Deity of Christ.

(b) *Mutual care, and the service of Christ* (14. 13-23).

Verse 13 contains (a) a general admonition addressed to both the weak and the strong; (b) a consequent exhortation to the strong, which continues to the end of verse 23. The special phase of the argument upon which the Apostle enters now is that of the effect of our conduct upon others, and the need of regard for their spiritual interests.

(a) "*Let us not therefore judge one another any more*" is an exhortation against both censoriousness on the part of the weak and contemptuousness on the part of the strong.

(b) "*but judge ye this rather, that no man put a stumbling block in his brother's way,*" is addressed to the strong. There is a slight change in the use of the word "judge," amounting almost to a play on the word. It now signifies "let this be your decision," or "determination." The same word is similarly used in 1 Cor. 2. 2, and 2 Cor. 2. 1, of an attitude to be adopted towards others, and in Acts 20. 16, 1 Cor. 7. 37, and

Titus 3. 12, of decision upon a certain course of action. Decisions thus made, in the exercise of our judgment in our service here below, will determine the nature of our reward at the Judgment Seat of Christ, where we must each give account of himself (verse 12).

The word *proskomma,* "stumbling block," denotes an obstacle against which one may dash his foot. Cf. 9. 32, 33, verse 20 below, 1 Cor. 8. 9; 1 Pet. 2. 8. The word *skandalon,* rendered "an occasion of falling," originally denoted that part of a trap to which the bait is attached, and so came to signify the trap or snare itself, and hence metaphorically anything that causes a hindrance.* See 9. 33; 11. 9; 16. 17. The Lord frequently used this metaphor in His teaching (Matt. 13. 41; 16. 23; 18. 7; Luke 17. 1). Though there is little to be distinguished in the use of the two words, yet the Apostle may have had in mind the two kinds of effect upon the weak brother as mentioned in what follows, that of bitterness of soul (verse 15), or that of acting against his conscience and so stumbling through lack of faith (verse 23).

Verse 14 reaffirms the principle of liberty, only to urge upon the strong brother the necessity that his consideration for the weak should spring from motives of love (see verse 15). "*I know,*" the Apostle says, "*and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus* (*i.e.,* not as a result of his own reasoning, but in virtue of his union

*See Notes on the Epistle to the Galatians by Hogg and Vine, pp. 262-4.

with the Lord and the instruction received from Him), *that nothing is unclean of itself.*" "*Unclean*" is, literally, "common," and here denotes what is ceremonially unclean. For the same sense of the word see Mark 7. 2; Acts 10. 14, 28; 11. 8; Heb. 10. 29— "*of itself,*" that is, of its own nature, in distinction from what conscientious scruples estimate it to be.

This latter is expressed in what follows, namely, "*save that* (*i.e.*, except that) *to him that counteth anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean.*" This exception is important; the argument just here is that the weak brother must not be stumbled, for, as far as his conscience alone is concerned, his scruples are valid, and everything must be done to prevent his violating them. Conscience alone is not an infallible guide as to the right or wrong of a thing in itself; but to act against one's conscience, even when it is misguided, is wrong.

The Apostle is not speaking here of what is morally impure, but simply of what is ceremonially so. To apply the statement that nothing is unclean of itself to what is morally impure, is to pervert the meaning of this Scripture.

Verse 15 gives a reason for the exception just mentioned: "*For if because of thy meat thy brother is grieved*" (that is to say, if, on account of what is eaten by the strong brother, the weak one is distressed) "*thou walkest no longer in love.*" The nature of the distress aroused in the weak brother's heart is shown

by the command that follows, "*Destroy not with thy meat him for whom Christ died.*" It is not a case merely of being pained at seeing what the strong brother does, and perhaps hardened against him in censoriousness of spirit; what is here in view is that the weak brother has been caused to stumble by acting against his conscience.

The word rendered "destroy" denotes to deprive of the possibility of fulfilling the objects of one's existence. Here the word is in the present tense, indicating a process involving spiritual disaster. In giving way to what to him is sinful, the weak brother is liable by that step to be led into a path of departure from the will of God, with consequent ruin of his present spiritual life. The appeal against no longer walking in love recalls the exhortations of chapter 13. 8-10, which are the basis of the present argument.

The mention of the Death of Christ forms the climax of the appeal. The Divine love displayed at the Cross is put in striking contrast to the selfishness which sets more value upon one's own desires and enjoyment than upon the spiritual welfare of a brother, and even runs the risk of bringing disaster upon him. Compare the appeal at the close of the argument in 15. 3, which again points to the Cross. Here, however, there is also a suggestion that the weak brother, who in common with others was the object of the Saviour's redeeming grace, belongs to Him, and is a member of that same body to which the strong brother belongs.

Verses 16 *to* 19 follow with more general principles relating to the subject, and here the plural number is used, as in verses 1, 7—9, 13. The exhortation, "*Let not then your good be evil spoken of,*" is still addressed to the strong.

The "good," *agathos,* is that which can be enjoyed or used with advantage; here it refers apparently to the stronger faith and greater liberty which are not to be exercised detrimentally to the weak brother, and prejudicially to the cause of Christ in an evil testimony on the part of unbelievers; cf. 2. 24. Possibly there is a reference to what the weak brother esteems to be good, namely, abstaining from meat and from wine. A different word in the original stands for "good" in verse 21. There *kalos* signifies what is morally excellent.

Verses 17 *and* 18 state reasons for the exhortations just given. Here the subject is viewed in its relationship to the Kingdom of God, and in connection with the blessed Trinity—"*For the Kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.*" The Kingdom of God is the sphere of God's rule. In view, however, of the rebellion that has been raised against Him, the phrase most frequently signifies the sphere in which at any given time His rule is acknowledged. The evidence that a man has entered into the Kingdom of God, and that its powers work in him, is seen, not in adherence to prin-

ciples which have to do with outward things, such as eating and drinking, or refraining therefrom, but with inward, spiritual and essential matters, namely, righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

These three subjects, *righteousness, peace* and *joy*, have been already taken up in the first part of the Epistle in the same order. Righteousness forms the main subject of the first four chapters, and the three are brought together at the beginning of the fifth, *righteousness and peace* in verse 1, *joy* in verse 11. The same themes are resumed in a different connection later in the Epistle, *righteousness* in chapter 10 3-13, *peace* in 10. 15, *joy* in 12. 12, 15. While in the first part of the Epistle the three have to do with the provision made by God in the matter of justification and reconciliation with resulting joy, the present passage has specially in view the practical effects in the life of believers, namely, right moral relations one with the other, the peace that results from unity of heart and purpose, and joy in one another kindled by the Holy Spirit.

Verse 18 gives a confirmation of what has been stated in verse 17 : "*For he that herein serveth Christ is well pleasing to God and approved of men.*" The powers of the Kingdom of God which are expressed in righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, work by way of service to Christ. His Lordship, which was the prominent theme in the preceding section of the chapter, is again before us by intimation.

He who feels free to eat meat may be serving Christ as much as the one who abstains, but neither one nor the other can serve Him if righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit are lacking. On the other hand, where these things are in exercise he who manifests them can be assured of being pleasing to God and approved of men. God judges the inward motives. Man sees the outward effects. Men may differ in opinion as to the right or wrong of eating and drinking, but there can be no question in their minds as to the exercise of the moral and spiritual qualities here mentioned. It is not a question of popularity but of the candid approval of what is bound to stand the test of sincerity.

Verse 19 gives an exhortation deduced from what has been stated in verses 14 to 18, and resumes the exhortation in verse 13. That was negative, this is positive: "*So then let us follow after things which make for peace, and things whereby we may edify one another*" — literally, "the things of peace and the things of edification towards one another." The things of peace include righteousness and joy in the Holy Spirit (verse 7). Mutual upbuilding in the faith can proceed effectively only under conditions of peace. Cf. Ephes. 4. 3, and 1 Thess. 5. 11.

Building up is effected by:—
Love, 1 Cor. 8. 1; cf. Ephes. 4. 16.
Prophesying, 1 Cor. 14. 3, 4.

Exhortation, here, cf. Heb. 10. 25.*

Verses 20-23 resume the main subject of the chapter, repeating in other words the exhortation at the close of verse 15, but now with reference to edification. "*Overthrow not*" (*i.e.,* pull not down), says the Apostle, "*for meat's sake the work of God.*" The pulling down is in contrast to the building up in verse 19. "The work of God" suggests both the individual believer, as constituting a part of God's spiritual building, and the effects in him of the spiritual teaching by which the building proceeds. Cf. 1 Cor. 3. 17.

"*All things indeed are clean,*" not morally evil things, but all kinds of food. Cf. verse 14, and see note there. The statement "*Howbeit it is evil for that man who eateth with offence,*" has been taken in two ways: (1) as referring to the strong brother who, by his eating, causes the weak brother to stumble, (2) as referring to the weak brother who, by his eating, stumbles through acting against his own conscience. It is true that the strong are here addressed, but that is not a sufficient indication to guide us, for the evil is not necessarily predicated of the action of the party addressed. Verse 23, to which the argument is leading, indicates that Paul is speaking of the weak brother and of the condemnation into which he falls through eating against the dictates of his own con-

* See "Notes on Thessalonians," by Hogg and Vine, p. 176.

science; he thereby lapses from his spiritual integrity.

Verse 21 broadens the principle to include abstinence from everything on the part of the strong prejudicial to the weak: "*It is good not to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor to do anything whereby thy brother stumbleth.*" "*It is good*" is set in contrast to "it is evil" in verse 20. The strong might argue that his enjoyment of liberty was good in itself, and that the weak brother's servitude to mere scruples is evil. Paul refutes the argument, showing that the use of liberty may be a veritable evil, and that with reference to any action whatever (cf. 1 Cor. 8. 12, 13).

Verses 22 *and* 23 bring in the subject of faith, and provide a further reason for abstinence. The appeal is still to the strong: "*The faith which thou hast, have thou to thyself before God.*" This recalls verse 2. The faith spoken of is that by which he who is strong regards it as lawful to partake of all kinds of meat. He is not called upon to renounce a principle or to think that anything was wrong which was not actually so, but rather to exercise his liberty with a view to the welfare of the weak brother. Faith is necessary indeed, but it is not to be displayed, as if to show one's superiority to those who have scruples about things. The responsibility is to act before God, that is, in the secrecy of communion with Him. "*Happy is he that judgeth not himself in that which he approveth.*" This follows closely with the preceding sentence and shows the value of faith so exercised.

It also recalls the closing statement of verse 5, "Let each man be fully assured in his own mind." The appeal is still to the strong brother on behalf of the weak. The happiness consists not so much in being free from scruples about doing anything, but in being free from having to judge himself for running the risk of stumbling his brother. He may approve of eating meat, but if he abstains in order not to stumble the weak brother, he will be saved from having to pass sentence upon himself for his action.

Verse 23, while stating the case of the weak brother, is still addressed to the strong: "*But he that doubteth is condemned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith; and whatsoever is not of faith is sin.*" The strong brother is reminded that the weak brother who is influenced to act contrary to his conscience, and consequently is troubled about his act, is condemned; not that he comes under the condemnation referred to in chapter 8. 1, but that he is proved to be guilty of having acted apart from faith, and therefore of displeasing the Lord. This, though addressed to the strong, is intended as a warning also to the weak.

Faith is the basis of the believer's relation to Christ and should be the guiding principle of all his actions, leading him to do whatever he does because he belongs to Christ, whom it is his aim to please, and because he must give account at His Judgment Seat. If a believer acts from any other motive than that of faith, if he acts, for instance, through simple com-

pliance with the opinion of another person, his act is sin. Again, right motives never justify wrong action. What is evil cannot be excused on the ground of good intentions.

Three associated, yet different, words are used in verses 22 and 23, *krinō, diakrinō,* and *katakrinō.* The first, rendered "judgeth," denotes to discern with a view to passing sentence upon the action. The second, rendered "doubteth," here denotes to make a distinction in such a way as to hesitate concerning the right or wrong of an action. The third signifies to pass sentence of condemnation.

(c) *Mutual advantage, and the example of Christ* (15. 1-4).

This obviously continues the subject of chapter 14, but broadens out to the more general view of the relationship of believers one with another and with the Lord. The address is to the strong, whom, however, the Apostle has not hitherto described as such. He speaks of them in the plural, defining them with the article, literally "we the strong ones." It has been suggested that such describe themselves by this term, and that he is somewhat ironical. In any case by associating himself with them he presses his argument the more cogently because of its characteristic delicacy (cf. 14. 13, 19).

The obligation expressed in the word "ought," which has the position of emphasis, while based upon the injunctions in chapter 14, has especially in view

what he is about to say of the example of Christ. The duty of bearing the infirmities of the weak carries his argument further than hitherto. So far the exhortations have been to avoid stumbling the weak, and to follow things which make for peace and edification. There is something more to be done. The strong must actually support the burdens of the weak by submitting to self-restraint. That is to say, the strong must regard their self-denial not merely as so much virtuous abstinence but as a means of bearing the infirmities of the weak (cf. Gal. 6. 2). The infirmities are those scruples which arise through weakness of faith. A different word, *adunatos,* from that in 14. 1, is now applied to the weak. The change of expression is due to its being set in contrast to the term "the strong," *dunatos. Adunatos* signifies "lacking power."

A Christian can claim liberty as a believer, but he is never to act in the spirit of selfishness. It is selfishness that refuses to bear the burdens of others.

Verse 2 gives a positive exhortation in contrast to the last clause: "*Let each one of us please his neighbour for that which is good, unto edifying,*" or, more closely to the original, "with a view to what is good, with the aim of edification." Cf. Gal. 1. 10; 1 Thess. 2. 4. There the contrast is between pleasing God and pleasing men. Here it is between pleasing oneself and pleasing others. See also 1 Cor. 10. 33. Whatever makes for the edification of a fellow-believer is good. If I consult for the good of another I consult for his

edification. To please my neighbour, in the sense of this verse, is not weakly to comply with his desires, but to act with a view to his lasting benefit.

In *verse* 3 the Apostle leads, as frequently elsewhere, to the example of Christ as a motive for the believer's action (cf. 2 Cor. 8. 9; Phil. 2. 6, *e.g.*): "*For Christ also pleased not Himself.*" In what follows we might have expected that he would show how Christ acted for our good in accomplishing our salvation. Instead of this he gives the higher motive which filled the heart of Christ, that of the accomplishment of the Father's will, with the suffering involved therein, and quotes from the Septuagint of Psa. 69. 9: "*but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproacheth Thee fell upon Me.*" The force of the quotation lies in this, that if Christ, instead of acting in self-gratification, voluntarily endured the effects of man's hostility to God, and that with a view to saving us from the consequences of our sin, what an obligation have we to abstain from self-gratification, submitting to the restraint involved therein in order to advance the welfare of others! How insignificant is any inconvenience or suffering caused to us in comparison with the sufferings which Christ endured!

Verse 4 gives the reason for the quotation, and shows how the Old Testament supports the teaching of the New and bears directly upon the lives of believers in the present age: "*For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our*

learning, that through patience and through comfort of the Scriptures we might have hope." Since the Old Testament Scriptures are of permanent value in their instruction for us, the particular quotation in verse 3, while in point of fact it refers to Christ, was likewise written for our sakes, that we might learn the lesson of this passage. What is made known of the character of Christ in Psa. 69. 9, was written in order that we might have the mind of Christ. The patience and the comfort produced by the Scriptures are required in bearing the infirmities of the weak.

The strong, who exercise patience, and the weak, who are supported thereby, both derive comfort. There is more, however, than this. Subjection to the Word of God inspires hope of the glory of God. Cf. 5. 2 to 5, a passage which the Apostle seems to recall here, for there he speaks both of patience and hope and their cause and effect. Cf. 1 Pet. 1. 13. "The hope" (the article is present in the original though it is not necessarily to be pressed) has been a frequent subject in the Epistle.

Section (9) 15. 5-13.

Mutual Responsibilities of All Believers.

This section forms a conclusion (1) to the subject of mutual forbearance and (2) to the main teaching of the whole Epistle. It is fitting that the grand theme,

the Gospel, its nature and effects, which occupies the great bulk of the Epistle, should terminate with the dominant note of glorifying God. That note is struck in the following way:—

(1) believers are to glorify God by a consistent and united testimony (verses 5, 6):

(2) they are to receive one another to the glory of God (verse 7):

(3) Gentiles were destined to glorify God together with the Jews (verses 8, 12).

Thus from matters of mutual forbearance, the Apostle passes to the broader subject of Jews and Gentiles, which he had taken up in detail in chapters 9 to 11. The correct rendering in verse 8 is "For," as in R.V., not "Now," as in A.V. The latter gives the appearance of the beginning of a new section, whereas verse 8 confirms what has just been said in the preceding verse.

In *verse* 5 Paul passes from the Scriptures as the source of patience and comfort, to God as the Author of these qualities, and makes this the basis of a prayer for harmony of thought and feeling one toward another, and that not by mere human effort, but as a result of following the example set by the Lord. The phrase "according to Christ Jesus" recalls verse 3. In not pleasing Himself, but acting for our good, Christ manifested that patience which it is necessary for us to imitate if we are to act one toward another in this manner. But there is a higher motive even

than mutual edification and comfort, and this, which was manifested by the Lord, is expressed in the next verse.

Verse 3 has shown that in not pleasing Himself Christ sought the will of His Father and glorified Him. *Verse* 6 shows that in the case of believers, unity of mind and harmony of testimony are necessary if God is to be glorified by them. Where such unity exists, the difficulties with which the Apostle has been dealing in chapter 14 vanish, and God will be glorified. Note the order (a) oneness of mind, (b) oneness of testimony; the latter is dependent on the former. The R.V. rendering, "The God and Father of," is confirmed by the connection with verse 3. The phrase "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" occurs in 2 Cor. 1. 3; Eph. 1. 3; 1 Pet. 1. 3; "the God and Father of the Lord Jesus," in 2 Cor. 11. 31; "God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," in Col. 1. 3; "the God of our Lord Jesus Christ," in Eph. 1. 17. Cf. John 20, 17; Heb. 1. 8, 9.

Verse 7 recalls 14. 1, and the succeeding argument, while addressed to the weak and the strong, is also of a general character. The saints are to receive one another, as Christ received them, "*to the glory of God the Father.* Cf. 14. 13. What was there said of God is here said of Christ.

The glory of God was the object in view in the reception of each by Christ, and the same object is to be in view in the kindly and considerate attitude

adopted by believers one toward another; no mere toleration, but hearty reception of one another. That the Apostle now has in view the union of Jew and Gentile in Christ, in the matter of this mutual forbearance and harmony, and the resulting glory of God, is indicated by the following context. Cf. Eph. 1. 6, 10-14.

Verse 8, as we have said, does not introduce a new subject, a kind of appendix to the Epistle, it continues the subject of verses 5 to 7, connecting it also with previous parts of the Epistle, where the Apostle has shown how Gentiles have been brought by the Gospel into the favour of God. There seems to be an intimation that those who were weak in faith were chiefly Jews. Cf. Acts 21. 20. But in any case Paul passes from the theme of the weak and the strong to the wider topic which has formed one of the main objects before him, in order to bring it to a fitting close.

The connection with the preceding verse might be put in this way: "Christ has received you to the glory of God, and this became possible because of His service to weak and strong, for He became a servant of the Jews, for the sake of the truth of God, in order to confirm by their fulfilment the promise made to the fathers, and that by this means Gentiles might be brought into the blessings of salvation." Jews and Gentiles, weak and strong, both have then a common

interest in this service of Christ, and so this becomes an additional motive for Christian forbearance.

The phrase "the truth of God" is indicative of His faithfulness in the fulfilment of His promises. Faithfulness is exhibited and embodied in Christ. This is elsewhere stated in 2 Cor. 1. 20: "How manysoever be the promises of God, in Him (*i.e.*, in Christ) is Yea."

The confirmation of the promises given unto the fathers began in the Incarnation. "When the fulness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, that He might redeem them which were under the Law" (Gal. 4. 4, 5). Christ came to minister primarily to the Jewish people. He Himself said, "I was not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt. 15. 24. Cf. 10. 6). The fulfilment of His ministry in regard to "the circumcision" is yet to take place when the nation is eventually delivered. See 11. 26, 27. His mission to the Jews in the days of His flesh was, however, preliminary to the carrying out of the purposes of grace on a wider scale, and to this the Apostle now refers.

The double parallel in *verse* 9 should be noticed: (a) "for His mercy" is parallel to (a) "for the truth of God"; (b) "that the Gentiles might glorify God" is parallel to (b) "that He might confirm the promises given unto the fathers." This is given in chiastic or crosswise, form, (a), (b), (b), (a).

CHAPTER XV.

Salvation is of the Jews (John 4. 22); the Gentiles therefore have no room for boasting against the Jews, nor should they look contemptuously upon Jewish scruples, as manifested in the case of the weak brother. But again, if salvation is of the Jews, this is in order that it might be granted to the Gentiles; therefore Jewish believers should not pass censorious judgment upon Gentile believers who claim liberty from certain religious scruples.

The purposes of God, that both Jews and Gentiles might join in praise to God for salvation, and glorify His name, are now shown to be in accordance with the Old Testament, from which he gives four quotations. In chapter 9 a quotation was taken from Hosea in order to exhibit the same truth (9. 25, 26). But that was followed by quotations which foretell the temporary rejection of Israel. Now in chapter 15 the Old Testament is shown to reveal the union of Jew and Gentile.

The first quotation is from the Septuagint of Psalm 18. 49: — "*As it is written, Therefore will I give praise unto Thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto Thy Name.*" The language of David in celebrating his conquests over the nations is seen to be prophetically the language of Christ expressed through Gentile believers in giving thanks to God for their salvation. Ultimately also the prophecy will be fulfilled in the Millennial Day.

The second quotation (*verse* 10) is from Deut. 42.

43: "*And again He saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with His people.*" This is from the close of the Song of Moses, which gives a history of the nation of Israel from its earliest times till the overthrow of Antichrist and the Gentile nations gathered together under him, and the setting up of Messiah's Millennial Kingdom. The sword of Jehovah will destroy "the head of the leaders of the enemy" (verse 42), that is to say, the Antichrist himself. In view of the overthrow of the great persecutor and his associates, and the deliverance of the Jews, the joyful summons goes forth to the world, "Rejoice, O ye nations, with His people." This is a Millennial note. The national blessing of Gentile peoples is dependent upon the deliverance of the Jewish nation. The same principle has held good in things spiritual, and hence the Apostle applies such passages to the Gospel.

The third quotation (*verse* 11) is from the Septuagint of Psalm 117. 1: "*And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles: and let all the peoples praise Him.*" The mention of God's truth and mercy, in verses 8 and 9 of this chapter, are probably reminiscent of the second verse of this Psalm: "His mercy is great toward us; and the truth of the Lord endureth for ever. Hallelujah."

The fourth quotation (*verse* 12) is from the Septuagint of Isa. 11. 10: "*And again, Isaiah saith, There shall be the root of Jesse, and He that ariseth to rule over the Gentiles; on Him shall the Gentiles*

hope." This closing quotation goes further than those preceding, and specifically mentions Christ as the subject of Old Testament predictions concerning the blessing designed for Jews and Gentiles. In Isaiah, again, the scope is Millennial, and while the Apostle's application is to the Gospel, in this case it necessarily includes the future period as well. The reference to Christ as the root of Jesse intimates (1) His Incarnation as a descendant of the father of David, and (2) His fruitfulness as the Source of all Divinely appointed prosperity for the nation.

The four quotations are taken from all three parts of the Old Testament, the Law (verse 10), the Psalms (verses 9, 11), and the Prophets (verse 12). Accordingly the truth of the inclusion of Jew and Gentile in Christ through the Gospel is shown to extend through the whole range of Old Testament prophecy. This, then, adds point to the preceding exhortations as to mutual forbearance.

Verse 13 not only brings to a close the main part of the Epistle, but affords a final reason for concord among brethren, in view of the unifying character of the fulfilment of the hope set before us. We shall be dwelling in harmony then; why not now? Paul has concluded the hortatory part of his treatise with a final confirmation from the Old Testament Scriptures. He now turns, as he did above (see note on verse 5), to God, the Author of the Scriptures, and breaks out again into prayer for his readers: "*Now the God of*

hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, in the power of the Holy Ghost." Literally, "the God of the hope," because He is the Author of that hope which through His grace is set before both Gentile and Jew in Christ. The hope is not mere expectancy, it carries with it the assurance of faith. Joy and peace are shown in this verse to be both (a) produced, and (b) productive. They

(a) (1) are the gift of God,
(2) are the outcome of "the hope,"
(b) (3) find their productive element in faith,
(4) find their expression through the power of the Spirit in the abounding efficiency of hope.

This active hope in the believer's life produces the reflection of the character of God Himself, as "the God of the hope."

This verse has a definite connection with verse 4. It also runs parallel to the subject dealt with in chapters 3 to 5. Faith was shown to be basic in chapter 3. 22, to 5. 11, the effect being hope, accompanied by peace and joy (5. 2-5). The main theses begins with faith (1. 17), and terminates here with the same theme in the words "in believing." The student will do well to trace the subject of faith through the Epistle in its various applications. For instance, seeking, finally, to adjust the differences between the weak and the strong, the Apostle stresses the principle of faith

(14. 1, 2, 22, 23). Where faith acts, such differences are settled, and the way is open for God to fill each and all with joy and peace. Faith is the controlling influence which decides questions regarding liberty, and produces that peace and joy in which the believer's hope is rendered effective by the Spirit of God.

CONCLUSION OF THE EPISTLE.

Chapter 15. 14, to Chapter 16. 27.

This consists of seven sections :—

(1) 15. 14-21 : *the Apostle's ministry.*
(2) 15. 22-29 : *his future plans and immediate business.*
(3) 15. 30-33 : *a request for prayer, and a benediction.*
(4) 16. 1-16 : *a commendation of Phœbe, and salutations to friends in Rome.*
(5) 16. 17-20 : *admonition, commendation, assurance and benediction.*
(6) 16. 21-24 : *salutations from Corinth.*
(7) 16. 25-27 : *doxology.*

Section (1) 15. 14-21.

Paul's Ministry.

(a) Its nature—verses 14-16a.
(b) Its effects—verses 16b to 19a.
(c) Its scope—verses 19b to 21.

(a) *The nature of the Apostle's ministry* (15. 14-16a).

In *verse* 14 he introduces the statement of the immediate purpose of his closing remarks by a commendatory assurance regarding his readers: "*And I myself am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.*"

This recalls his commendation at the opening of the Epistle, 1. 8. Not that there was necessarily any connection in his own mind between that verse and what he now writes. There he spoke of the general report concerning them, here he states his own assurance. The "also" (or rather, perhaps, "even") presents a contrast to the exhortations he has just been giving Those whom he addressed were experienced in Christian doctrine, which also they had learned to put into practice. They were "full of goodness," a word which expresses every form of kindly activity towards others. They were "filled with all knowledge," *i.e.*, amply instructed in spiritual truth. "Knowledge puffeth up," but theirs found expression in love which "buildeth up." Their goodness and knowledge enabled them to admonish one another (*noutheteō*, lit., to put into the mind, a word used both of instruction and admonition). These qualities are requisite for effective ministry in this respect. For the association of "full," or "filled" in an entirely opposite connection, see 1. 29.

The instructions and admonitions in this Epistle

did not, then, betoken lack of confidence in them. Paul has other motives, which he now states. He writes "*more boldly*" than might appear to be justified from the commendation he had just given (*verse* 15.) The phrase "*in some measure*" is probably to be taken with "the more boldly." Paul's method was not that of mere denunciation. His admonitions, given indeed, as he here states, in virtue of his apostolic calling, were tempered with God-given wisdom, brotherly love and natural refinement. He brings again to mind things which, as he has with his characteristic courtesy just admitted, they knew already. He was not the first to teach them. He puts them in mind, he says, "*because of the grace that was given me of God*"—a beautiful combination of humility with authority. He has a Divinely imparted authority for writing, but the bestowal of it was an act of God's favour. See 1. 5, and Eph. 3. 18. He instructs them, not from the lofty pinnacle of a mere ecclesiastical authority, but as one who, whilst Divinely commissioned, is a sharer with them of grace. Cf. 12. 3.

He was appointed "*a minister* (*leitourgos, see on* 13. 6) *of Christ Jesus unto the Gentiles.* The metaphor is that of priestly service. This is the use of the word, *e.g.*, in Deut. 10. 8, and Heb. 10. 11. That the Apostle uses it figuratively, and not in an ecclesiastical sense, is obvious from the context. The order of the Divine titles suggests that the Lord is the

exalted One, who reveals Himself to Paul, commissioning him for the service of the Gospel, on the ground of His having accomplished His saving work on the Cross.

The object of his ministry was that the offering up of the Gentiles (a sacrificial offering, another priestly metaphor) "might be made acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost." For a similar thought see Phil. 2. 17, where, however, the faith of the Philippian saints is the sacrifice upon which the libation of Paul's own life is poured. "Being" (lit., having been) "sanctified by the Holy Ghost," completes the references to the Levitical sacrificial offerings. (1) The Apostle is, figuratively speaking, the priest, not by natural descent but by Divine call; (2) the Gentile believers are the offerers and the offering, presenting themselves as living sacrifices (12. 1); (3) as the sacrifices of old were to be free from physical defect and must be cleansed with water, so the offering of believers themselves must be sanctified by the Holy Spirit, that all may be acceptable to God, in contrast to those sacrifices in which God had "no pleasure" (Heb. 10. 6, 9).

(b) *The effects of the Apostle's ministry* (16b-19a).

The Holy Spirit is said to be the Agent in sanctification in 2 Thess. 2. 13; 1 Pet. 1. 2, and here only. Cf. also 1 Cor. 6. 11. In all these the sanctification is associated with the electing grace of God, and is "a Divine act preceding the acceptance . . . of

the Gospel by the individual."* This is indicated here by the use of the perfect participle "having been."

In *verse* 17 he declares his glorying is the outcome of the realisation of God's grace toward him. Accordingly that grace produces two effects, (1) boldness toward his readers (verses 1, 15), (2) glorying in Christ Jesus. There are two further reasons which justify his glorying: (1) it is "in Christ Jesus" and not in himself; (2) it is "in things pertaining to God," *i.e.*, not pertaining to his own advantage and interests, but to the service of the Gospel and its effects, which he has just described as an offering to God. For the phrases cf. Heb. 2. 17; 5. 1.

In saying, in verse 18, that he will not dare to speak of any things save those which Christ wrought through him, it is plain, from what follows in verse 20, that he had in mind the fact that others were engaged in Gospel work besides himself. The margin of the R.V. is therefore closer to his meaning, as well as to the original: "*For I will not dare to speak of those things which Christ wrought not through me.*" He is not glorying in other men's labours.

His reference to the obedience of the Gentiles expresses the effect of what was wrought through him by the power of Christ. Taking the marginal reading

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* See "Notes on the Epistles to the Thessalonians," by Hogg and Vine, p. 222.

of the first part of the verse as above mentioned, we may understand him to mean "but I will confine myself to those things which Christ has wrought through me." It is quite according to his style to pass immediately from a negative statement to a positive, without following up the complete positive statement. "The obedience of the Gentiles" is "the obedience of faith," see 1. 5, and cf. 10. 8-10.

His Gospel testimony was confirmed "*by word and deed* (*i.e.*, by preaching and by signs, and wonders following). Cf. Mark 16. 20. The significance of the order here is therefore different from that in the phrase "work and word," 2 Thess. 2. 17, *e.g.*, which there indicates that practice should precede precept.

Semeion, a sign, is "a token or indication whether given by man to man, 2 Thess. 3. 17; Matt. 26, 48; or appointed by God to be observed by man, as circumcision was, Rom. 4. 11; or whether given by God in natural phenomena, Luke 21. 25, or in the trend of human affairs, Matt. 16. 3, or through His Son, John 2. 11; 20. 30; or His servants, Acts 5. 12; 7. 36; or whether given by Satan through his agents, Matt. 24. 24; 2 Thess. 2. 9; Rev. 16. 14."

A wonder is "something strange, exceptional, causing the beholder to marvel. These words occur together concerning the works of the Lord Jesus, Acts 2. 22, and (as here) of His Apostle; also in 2 Cor. 12. 12; Heb. 2, 4. They describe the same act or event from different standpoints. 'Power' declares its

source to be supernatural; 'sign' expresses its purpose and appeals to the understanding; 'wonder' describes its effect upon the observer and appeals to the imagination. The last is the least important idea; hence 'wonder' is never used save in association with 'sign.'"*

All was wrought "*in the power of the Holy Ghost.*" Cf. verse 13, and see note there. Cf. also 1 Cor. 2. 4. This clause probably applies both to what was stated in verse 18 and to what has just preceded. The Holy Spirit not only was the Agent in the preaching, but also in the signs and wonders. The effectivity of the Apostle's ministry depended not upon his own power or eloquence, it was the Lord who wrought all by the Holy Spirit.

(c) *The scope of the Apostle's ministry* (19b-21).

His ministry extended "*from Jerusalem, and round about even unto Illyricum.*" The wording of the original may imply either (1) Jerusalem and the district round about it, and as far as Illyricum, or (2) throughout the countries lying between Jerusalem and Illyricum. The latter seems more natural and is in conformity with the scope of Paul's labours as recorded in the Acts. The phrase may or may not include Illyricum.

*See "Notes on the Epistles to the Thessalonians," by Hogg and Vine, p. 264.

He had " fully preached " the Gospel, a word suggestive of both the geographical extent of his evangelical ministry, as in the context, and also the accomplishment of his ministry itself. Just as a messenger fulfils his message by conveying it, so the Apostle had not shrunk from declaring " the whole counsel of God " (Acts 20. 27).

" *Yea,*" he says, " *making it my aim* (a word literally meaning ' to love honour,' and hence to be ambitious) *so to preach the Gospel, not where Christ was already named, that I might not build upon another man's foundation.*" This qualifies the statement in the preceding verse. His pioneer methods here described give evidence of the validity of his Apostleship. Cf. 1 Cor. 9. 2; 2 Cor. 3. 2, 3. " Where Christ was already named," signifies where people had been brought through faith in Christ to call upon His Name in open confession. Cf. Isa. 26. 13; Amos 6. 10; 2 Tim. 2. 19.

In *verse* 21 he confirms the statement as to the scope of his ministry by a quotation from the Septuagint of Isa. 52. 15—*but, as it is written, They shall see, to whom no tidings of Him came, and they who have not heard shall understand*—a Messianic passage referring to Millennial conditions, but which the Apostle, by the Holy Spirit, as in other quotations, applies to present circumstances in connection with his Gospel service, the principle being the same in both cases. Paul himself is a servant of Him who is spoken of in

the Isaiah passage as the Servant of Jehovah. Further, what will be true hereafter of Gentile nations is now likewise true of individuals. Cf. Acts 13. 47.

Section (2) 15. 22-29.

His Future Plans and Immediate Business.

(a) His future plans and expectation—verses 22-24.
(b) His immediate business—verses 25-27.
(c) His future plans and assurance—verses 28, 29.

(a) *His future plans and expectations* (15. 22-24). In *verse* 22 he states that he had been frequently hindered from coming to Rome. *Enkoptō,* to hinder, literally denotes "to cut into," and signifies to impede a person by cutting off, or breaking up, his way; cf. Acts 24. 4; Gal. 5. 7; 1 Thess. 2. 18, and 1 Pet. 3. 7. The connection with the preceding verses shows that what prevented him from coming had been his effort to visit places where Christ had not been proclaimed, though the demands made upon him in this respect were not the only reasons.

He had fulfilled the foundation work entrusted to him in those parts, that is what he means by "having no more any place in these parts." And he had for many years a fervent longing (*epipothia,* an intense desire) to come to Rome; and this with a view to going on to Spain.

Spain passed under Roman rule in 133 B.C., and became a "Province," though the conquest of the whole country was not complete till 19 B.C. By the Apostle's time it contained large numbers of Jews, and this would probably strengthen his desire to preach Christ there. There is some evidence that he did so. In an Epistle to the Corinthians written by Clement of Rome, a follower of the Apostle, it is stated that Paul "went to the end of the west." Though that has been taken to mean Italy, it could not possibly be so described when we remember that by that time Rome was the centre of the world. This visit might easily have taken place between A.D. 62 and 66, the period between his two imprisonments. The Apostle also seems to have had a Divinely given assurance that he would go there.

He hoped, he says, to see them *en route, and to be brought on his way thitherward by them*—lit., "to be sent forward," by prayer and means of support, and possibly with companions, as was frequently the case. Cf. 1 Cor. 16. 6, 11, and see Acts 20. 38; 21. 5.

How characteristically courteous and delicate is his word, "*if first in some measure I shall have been satisfied with your company!*" He would be satisfied, not as much as he would have wished, but as much as the fact that he had Spain as his objective would permit; if his project was carried out he would be able to spend only a comparatively brief time in Rome. His state-

ment receives its best comment in what he says at the beginning of his Epistle, 1. 12.

(b) *His immediate business* (15. 25-27).

The sentence at the beginning of verse 23 was interrupted by the parentheses in verse 24. The beginning of *verse* 25 scarcely seems to resume the words at the beginning of verse 23. There is a break in the construction, and the Apostle here sets his present intention of going to Jerusalem in contrast to his visit to Rome, whereas at the beginning of verse 23 he set his intention of visiting Rome in contrast to the hindrance which had prevented his doing so.

The special service before him was the conveyance of the gifts from the churches in Macedonia and Achaia which he mentions in 1 Cor. 16., and 2 Cor. 8. and 9.

It had *been the good pleasure of Macedonia and Achaia* (lit., " Macedonia and Achaia have been well pleased) *to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints that were at Jerusalem.* Macedonia was the Roman Province containing Neapolis, Philippi, Amphipolis, Apollonia, Thessalonica, and Berea. Achaia was the southern Province, which contained Athens, Corinth, Cenchrea.

The word rendered " contribution " is *koinōnia, i.e.,* fellowship, or communion, a sharing together; so he calls it in 2 Cor. 9. 13; see also Heb. 13. 16. Where such a word is applicable the donors enter into the

experiences of the recipients, taking part in their necessities by sharing their own goods with them. See also chapter 12. 13.

There were evidently a large number of poor amongst the saints. The arrangement referred to in Acts 2. 35, for a community of goods, had left an aftermath of poverty. It could only be in any case a temporary expedient. Not long after, the elders in the church there urged upon Paul and his fellow-missionaries the need of stirring up the churches in other regions to remember the poor in Judæa, and he is able to add in writing to the Galatians that he was zealous to do so (Gal. 2. 10). The statement in this verse plays an important part in enabling us to fix the date of this Epistle. It must have been written soon after 2 Corinthians, and just prior to Paul's visit to Jerusalem, mentioned in Acts 20. 21, that is, about the year A.D. 57.

In *verse* 27 he first speaks of the spirit which characterised the churches in regard to this gift. Their "good pleasure," or joyous determination, was itself the outcome of the Apostle's instruction. He not only appealed to the generosity of the churches in Greece, but showed them the reasonableness of the contribution and the responsibility connected with it.

If the Gentiles had been made partakers (more literally, "have had a share in") their spiritual things (*i.e.*, those blessings which primarily, in the providence of God, belong to Israel, but which at the same time

pertain to the Gospel), they owed it to them also to minister unto them (*leitourgeō*, see 13. 16, and notes on verse 16 of this chapter) in carnal things. To the spiritual blessings received by the Gentiles he had already referred when showing how the Gentiles had "become partaker with them of the root of the fatness of the olive tree," 11. 17. Cf. 11. 24. Moreover it was Jews who brought the message and the blessings of salvation to the Gentiles in the first instance.

The "carnal things" were things pertaining to the body. The word is not used in its moral sense here. It refers, as in 1 Cor. 9. 11, to that which pertains to the natural life, such as food and raiment, and therefore to the means by which those things are obtained.

(c) *His future plans and assurance* (15. 28, 29).

The phraseology in *verse* 28 indicates the sacredness in God's sight of ministering material assistance to the saints. Cf. Phil. 4. 18; Heb. 13. 16. The metaphor of sealing conveys the thought of a formal ratification of this ministry of the churches by his faithful delivery of the gift to the saints at Jerusalem. The material help was the fruit of his spiritual ministry to the saints in Greece. But this spiritual blessing to Gentiles emanated in the first place from the Jewish nation. Hence, in meeting the needs of the saints in Jerusalem, the churches of the Gentiles were but bringing forth the fruits of their having shared with them in spiritual things. There may be also an intimation of the Apostle's desire for the removal of any

existing prejudice on the part of the Jewish believers in Jerusalem, and perhaps in Rome. In 2 Kings 22. 4, the Septuagint has "sealed the silver" for "sum the silver."

When he had "sealed to them this fruit," he would "go on by them into Spain." That is, not only would he go from Jerusalem through Rome to Spain, but he looked for the assistance of the saints in Rome in the matter of his journey further west.

"*And*," he says, "*I know, that when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of Christ*" (*verse* 29). The fulness, *plerōma*,* here signifies that which is complete. He had already spoken in this Epistle of his desire to see them, that he might impart a spiritual gift to them, and he now expresses his confidence, the outcome of his experiences of the Lord's power working in and through him, that on going to Rome he will minister Christ to the saints there in all the fulness of blessing.

The "blessing," *eulogia*, is "the sum total of the favour shown by God to man in Christ."* (Cf. Gal. 3. 14; 1 Cor. 10. 16; Ephes. 1. 3; 1 Pet. 3. 9).

Paul could not foresee the actual circumstances under which he would eventually arrive at Rome, but,

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* For a list of the uses of the word, see "Notes on Galatians," by Hogg and Vine, p. 182.

* *Ibid.*, p. 137.

in whatever way he reached there, the confidence expressed in his words here was justified.

Section (3) 15. 30-33.

A Request for Prayer, and a Benediction.

The appeal which Paul now makes to his readers for their co-operation in prayer for himself, an appeal based upon their joint relationship to Christ and that love for another which is engendered by the Spirit of God, shows that, while he was confident of coming to them in the fulness of the blessing of Christ, he was fully aware of the perils which lay in his path and of the possibility that his coming might not be attended with the happiest circumstances.

In *verse* 30, the basis of his request is, firstly, all that Christ is to them; secondly, *the love of the Spirit;* the phrase of itself might mean either the love which the Spirit of God shows, or the love which is exercised by believers as the outcome of the Spirit's work in their hearts. See Gal. 5. 22.

He beseeches them "to strive together with him in their prayers to God for him." *Sunagōnizomai* is literally "to agonise with." See Col. 2. 4, where also the subject is that of prayer. There the simple form *agōnizomai* is used, as elsewhere, whether of spiritual conflict or otherwise. Here, and here only in the New Testament, the long form is used, because the Apostle is requesting the fellowship of his readers with him in prayer. The request is suggestive of the spiritual foes,

whose efforts are directed against the prayers of God's people. Cf. Dan. 10. 12, 13; Eph. 6. 12, where the word is *palē*, a wrestling; and Col. 2. 1, where the word is *agōn*, the noun corresponding to the verb here.

The order in the original is "on my behalf toward God," which throws emphasis upon the latter words. The Apostle's earnest entreaty shows forcibly the value he set upon fervent supplications to God on behalf of the saints. Cf. 2 Cor. 1. 11; Phil. 1. 9; 1 Thess. 5. 25; 2 Thess. 3. 1; Philem. 22; Heb. 13. 18.

Paul's personal trust in God, and the Divine assurance given to him, did not make him independent of the prayers of the saints. "The knowledge of God's will and purpose does not render prayer superfluous, rather it encourages thereto. Cf. Ezek. 36. 37."*

In *verses* 31, 32, four subjects of prayer are set before his readers:—

(1) His safety in Judæa;

(2) The success of his service for the saints in Jerusalem;

(3) A joyful issue therefrom in his arrival at Rome;

(4) Rest with them after danger and toil.

There had been a time when Paul's antagonism had put people in fear in Jerusalem; now the antagonism

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*See "Notes on Thessalonians," page 282, by Hogg and Vine.

of his former associates rendered him apprehensive of his own safety. He desires prayer, therefore, (1) that he may be delivered "*from them that are disobedient in Judæa*"—*apeitheō*, the same word as in 2. 8; 10. 21; 11. 30, 31. For the corresponding noun *apeitheia* see 11. 30, 32. Unbelief is disobedience, faith is an act of obedience. See 1. 5; 16. 26:

(2) that his ministration which he has for Jerusalem (*i.e.*, for the saints there, the locality simply standing for the Christians in it) "*may be acceptable to the saints;*"—suggesting that, in addition to the opposition of unbelieving Jews, there was a likelihood of misunderstanding and prejudice on the part of Jewish Christians, especially those who had inclinations towards Judaism:

(3) that he may come unto them "*with joy through the will of God.*" This is apparently to be taken closely with what immediately precedes, indicating that he hoped for a joyful issue to his stay and service in Jerusalem. As a matter of fact he did go to Rome with joy, Acts 28. 15, 16. He was delivered from unbelieving Jews in Jerusalem, but the mode of travel by which he reached Rome was itself the outcome of their hospitality. God hears prayer, but the manner of the answer often differs from that which the suppliant expects, for God's ways are always best.

(4) that he may *together with them find rest. Sunanapauō* is a compound form of the word *anapauō*, and expresses mutual refreshment derived, on

the Apostle's part, from the deliverances from his foes and the success of his service, and, on the part of his readers, from the removal of their anxieties on his behalf and the answer to their prayers, as well as by Christian intercourse.

His request for prayer on their part leads him to offer prayer for them (*verse* 33). The title, "the God of peace," frequent in the Apostle's writings, was sometimes suggested by way of contrast with the disorder amongst his readers, as in 1 Thess. 5. 23; or sometimes by the sufferings and distractions which his readers were experiencing, as in 2 Cor. 13. 11, cf. Heb. 13. 20; sometimes in anticipation of the fulfilment of his exhortations, as in Phil. 4. 9. Here it seems to be set in contrast with the circumstances of danger to which he has just been referring. While he was perforce absent from his readers, though longing to be with them, the God of peace would be present with them all the time, and he desires that they may realise it.

Section (4) 16. 1-16.

A Commendation of Phœbe and Salutations to Friends in Rome (verses 3-16).

(a) *A commendation of Phœbe* (16. 1, 2).

The Apostle's "*I commend unto you*" is more than a mere mode of introduction; *sunistēmi* suggests the praise which our word "commendation" carries with it. Letters of commendation of a more formal char-

acter are referred to by him in 2. Cor. 3. 1, and became general in the intercourse of the churches, in order to provide safeguards against imposture. The commendation here given was not of this character.

Phœbe was probably the bearer of the Epistle; the context suggests that her journey was occasioned by some service which would need the assistance of the saints in Rome.

She was "a servant of the church . . . at Cenchreæ." This is the only instance in the New Testament of the use of the word *diakonos* of a woman. It denotes one who renders service of any character to another. There is no ground for assuming that Phœbe was a "deaconess" in the later and organised sense of the term, though her service would seem to have been of the same kind. Compare what he says of the household of Stephanas at Corinth (1 Cor. 16. 15).

Cenchreæ was the eastern port of Corinth, on the Saronic Gulf, about nine miles from the city, and an emporium of trade. Abundant opportunities for showing hospitality would therefore be afforded, especially to one who gave himself to entertain Christians when passing through.

They are instructed to "*receive her*" (*prosdechomai*, a strengthened form of the word *dechomai*, to receive or accept, and suggesting the thought of welcome) "*in the Lord*." See Phil. 2. 29. The phrase is frequent in this chapter. See verses 8. 11, 12 (twice),

13, 22. The phrase has special reference to traits of character, or to earthly relationships and circumstances, as indicating spiritual union with Him whose authority governs the life. See also 1 Cor. 1. 31; 4. 17; 7. 22, 39; 9. 2; 11. 11; 15. 58; 2 Cor. 10. 17; Ephes. 5. 8; 6. 1, 10, 21, etc. On the other hand, the phrase "in Christ" chiefly refers to the spiritual union with Christ as of those who are seated with Him in the heavenly places.

They were to receive her "*worthily of the saints*," that is, in such a manner as befits those who bear the name of saints. Compare the phrases:

"worthily of the calling wherewith ye were called" (Ephes. 4. 1).

"worthy (lit., worthily) of the Gospel of Christ" (Phil. 1. 27).

"worthily of the Lord" (Col. 1. 10).

"worthily of God" (1 Thess. 2. 12; 3 John 6, R.V.).

They were to assist her *in whatsoever matter she might have need of them.* There is nothing in the phraseology of this verse to indicate, as has been conjectured, the character of the business which she had in hand.

She herself also had been *a succourer of many.* By a compensating compassion, as she had devotedly rendered help to the Lord's people in her own locality, so now she was to receive help from the saints in the place where she had gone on her special errand.

Prostatis, succourer, is a feminine of *prostatēs*, a word of dignity which Paul chooses instead of another which he might have easily used, and indicating the high, not to say honourable, position which perhaps she occupied. *Prostatēs* was a title of a citizen in Athens who had the responsibility of seeing to the interests of resident aliens who were without civic rights. Among the Jews it signified a wealthy patron of a Jewish community, as in the case of the centurion in Luke 7. 5. Here it is used in a metaphorical sense to indicate that she had been a protectress of many.

She had also been, the Apostle says, a succourer of himself. This may refer to the occasion mentioned in Acts 18. 18, and to the circumstances, either of illness or danger, through which the Apostle had been passing.

(b) *Salutations to friends in Rome* (16. 3-16).

The first salutation is to "Prisca and Aquila," Paul's "fellow-workers in Christ Jesus." Priscilla (see Acts 18. 2) is the diminutive form of Prisca. Here and in Acts 18. 18, and 2 Tim. 4. 19, the wife's name comes first, perhaps suggesting that she was the more distinguished in Christian service. In 1 Cor. 16. 19, where they send salutations, the husband's name naturally comes first.

They had been expelled from Rome with the other Jews there in A.D. 52, owing to the decree of the

the limits of the Roman Empire before the third century; apartments in private houses might be especially devoted to this purpose."

Epænetus signifies "the object of praise." He was "*the firstfruits of Asia unto Christ,*" that is, in the Roman province of Asia. That he was the first saved as a result of the Apostle's testimony there would in itself make him very dear to Paul. The present salutation intimates that he had been steadfast in the faith and had kept up intercourse with the Apostle. For the subject of firstfruits, see on 8. 23, and 11. 16.

Two forms of the name *Mary* (*verse* 6) are found in the Greek text. Mariam, which represents the Hebrew Miriam, and thus is Jewish, denoting bitterness, and Maria(n), a Gentile name. In the former case it is the only Hebrew name in the chapter. The latter is the more probable reading. She had "*bestowed much labour,*" she had more literally "toiled much" for the saints—not merely a reminder of her services, but a mark of the Apostle's appreciation of what she had done for them.

Adronicus (*verse* 7) was a Greek name, denoting "a man of victory": *Junias* was short for Junianus, a Roman name. That the Apostle speaks of them as his kinsmen indicates (1) that they were Jews; if so, his mention of them in this way is consistent with what he had said about his fellow-nationals already in this Epistle (cf. 9. 3), or (2) that they were his blood-relations; this seems not unlikely from the emphatic

way in which he speaks of them; moreover others in the list were Jews.

These two brethren were Paul's "*fellow-prisoners.*" It would appear from this that at some time they had shared the Apostle's captivity, though possibly it simply indicates that, alike with him, they had suffered imprisonment in the cause of Christ. They were "*of note among the apostles.*" While this might mean that they were well known to the Apostles, the circumstances referred to suggest that they were honourably regarded in the apostolic circle.

They were evidently among the very early disciples, for they had "been (lit. become) in Christ" before Paul. Thus, if they were Paul's own relatives, he had family relations in Christ while he himself was persecuting the Church.

Ampliatus (*verse* 8) was a Roman slave name, frequently found as such in the inscriptions of persons belonging to Cæsar's household.

Urbanus (*verse* 9) is a name also found in a list of Imperial freed men, which suggests that Urbanus may have obtained his liberty. Paul calls him "our fellow-worker in Christ." The plural pronoun "our" indicates that he was not a personal companion of the Apostle, as in the case of those mentioned in verses 3 and 21, but one who was known both to the readers and to Paul as active in the Lord's work.

Stachys is a Greek name, masculine, and comparatively rare (denoting an ear of corn). Inscriptions

show the name in connection with the Imperial household.

Apelles (*verse* 10) is another Greek name found in connection with the Imperial household. The phrase, "*the approved in Christ,*" suggests that he had been in some way tested, had stood the test, and thus gained the approval and esteem of his brethren.

Them which are of the household of Aristobulus refers to his servants, rather than his kinsmen. Probably he was Aristobulus, the younger, mentioned by Josephus as the grandson of Herod the Great. If so he was friendly with the Emperor Claudius, and bequeathed his servants to him. They thus became part of Cæsar's household, though still known as in connection with Aristobulus.

Herodion (*verse* 11) was probably a Jew, and one of the household of Aristobulus just referred to.

The name *Narcissus* (a daffodil) was common among slaves and freedmen. It is therefore of little use endeavouring to identify him with any particular man of the history of that time, though the possibility is that he was an influential man who had slaves of his own, "*them of the household of Narcissus,*" and these latter, after he was put to death in the reign of Nero, passed into the hands of the Emperor. What is clear is that only certain of the household were converted.

Tryphæna and Tryphosa (*verse* 12) would be two sisters, by natural relationship. Their names, both Greek, signify "dainty" or "luxurious," meanings which

stand in contrast to that which is said of them. Their diligent service was still being continued among the saints in Rome. Both names occur in connection with Cæsar's household.

Persis is "the beloved, which laboured much in the Lord." An inscription has this name as that of a freed woman. The service the Apostle refers to was of such devoted character that she apparently had thereby endeared herself to the saints.

Rufus (*verse* 13) is a Roman name. Possibly the person referred to is the same as that in Mark 15. 21, as the Evangelist would seem to have written from Rome. Rufus was, however, a very common slave name. The description, "the chosen in the Lord," does not refer to the election of grace, which is common to all believers, but points to some special approval by which he was distinguished for his excellence as a Christian, or his usefulness.

The mother of Rufus had by some special motherly service to the Apostle, endeared herself to him. Hence he says of her, "His mother and mine." If Simon of Cyrene was her husband, it would appear from the context here that he was either dead or away from Rome, and so with his brother Alexander.

In verses 14 and 15, *Asyncritus* signifies "incomparable," *Phlegon* "burning"; *Hermes* was the Greek name for the Roman god Mercury; *Patrobas* means "the life of his father"; *Hermas* is a shortened form for Hermagoras, and is thus connected with the name

Hermes; Hermes was the commonest name amongst the Emperor's slaves; *Philologus* means "a lover of discourse"; *Julia* was probably his wife; the names appear very frequently in slave lists; it may be that *Nereus and his sister, and Olympas* were the children of Philologus and Julia.

For the command in verse 16, "*Salute one another with a holy kiss,*" compare 1 Cor. 16. 20; 2 Cor. 13. 12; 1 Thess. 5. 26; 1 Pet. 5. 14.

The salutation "*All the churches of Christ salute you,*" is found here only in the New Testament, and marks them in their relationship to Christ as His possession. The Apostle had doubtless given an intimation in various churches of his proposed visit to Rome, and thus would be requested to send greetings to the saints there. As all sorts of people went to live in Rome, many of the Christians in the city would be known to these in various churches, and even in the case of non-acquaintances the salutations would be natural.

Section (5) 16. 17-20.

(a) *Admonition* (verses 17, 18), (b) *Commendation* (verse 19), (c) *Assurance* (verse 20a), (d) *Benediction* (verse 20b).

A warning is now given against false treachers, such as those who had wrought mischief elsewhere. Apparently the trouble, if it was existent in Rome, had only

recently begun there. It has been suggested that those of whom he is now speaking promulgated the errors of Antinomianism, with which he had dealt in chapter 6, or belonged to the party referred to in chapter 14. Possibly the opposition was that arising from Judaistic teachings, with which Paul and his fellow-labourers were continually confronted.

He beseeches them to mark "*them which are causing the divisions and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrines which ye learned, and to turn away from them*" (*verse* 17).

The word *skopeō* signifies to keep one's eye upon, and is used in the sense of observing, with a view to following an example, as in Phil. 3. 17, or as here, as a danger to be avoided. The definite article before "divisions" and before "occasions of stumbling," suggests that, either the dangers were known to the readers as existent elsewhere, or that they had already been working among them in Rome. The word *dichostasia,* "divisions," literally denotes a standing apart.* For the word *skandalon,* an occasion of stumbling, see 9. 33; 11. 9, and 14. 13.

In the last passage he warned his readers to beware of causing divisions themselves. Here he warns them to guard against those who are guilty of doing it.

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*Notes on the Epistle to the Galatians, by Hogg and Vine; page 283.

The pronoun "ye" before "learned" bears emphasis, which serves forcibly to distinguish their true teachers from the false. Since they had not been instructed in the faith by Paul himself, he is referring to Apostolic teaching in general. That teaching was, as he says to the Thessalonians, "not the word of man, but the Word of God." It therefore could brook no compromise.

In exhorting them to turn away from the false teachers, the Apostle is not speaking of excommunication, but of personal dissociation from the offenders.

Section (6) 16. 21-24.

Salutation from Corinth.

Verse 21, *Timothy, my fellow-worker, saluteth you.* From 2 Cor. 1. 1, we learn that Timothy was with Paul in Macedonia when he wrote that Epistle (that was in the latter part of A.D. 57). Possibly the Apostle came on to Corinth alone. Timothy's name is not mentioned at the beginning of this Epistle as in so many others. He may have joined him before the Epistle was completed. He was at all events with him just before setting out from Corinth for Jerusalem (Acts 20. 4).

"*And Lucius and Jason and Sosipater, my kinsmen.*" The first of these may have been Lucius of Cyrene (Acts 13. 1), the second the Jason mentioned in Acts 17. 5; the third name is a longer form of Sōpater, as in Acts 20. 4. For the Apostle's mention of them as his kinsmen see on verse 7. Lucius is a Roman name, Jason and Sosipater are Greek names.

Verse 22, *"I, Tertius, who write the epistle, salute you in the Lord."* That the Apostle's amanuensis should insert this salutation is, firstly, a mark of the genuineness of the Epistle, as no forger would have mentioned his doing so; secondly, an instance of Paul's characteristic courtesy, it would not have been like him to dictate such a salutation in the third person; thirdly, of the sympathetic spirit and whole-hearted co-operation of this brother in the work in which the Apostle was engaged. His spiritual joy therein is likewise intimated by his mode of salutation "in the Lord." Tertius was a common name among the Romans.

Verse 23, *"Gaius my host, and of the whole church, saluteth you."* Not improbably the Gaius of 1 Cor. 1. 14. On his first visit to Corinth, Paul lodged with Aquila, then with Titus Justus (Acts 18. 1-7). On this occasion he stayed with Gaius, who either showed hospitality to all who came to see the Apostle, or opened his house for the gatherings of the church.

"Erastus, the treasurer of the city, saluteth you." Possibly the same Erastus whom Paul sent with Timothy into Macedonia before leaving Ephesus (Acts 19. 22), and to whom he refers in 2 Tim. 4. 20, as having remained at Corinth. The fact that the one here mentioned held a position of considerable importance in the city is not sufficient in itself to make the identification unlikely, as he may have relinquished his

position after the time of the writing of the present Epistle.

"*And Quartus the brother.*" The article does not imply that he was related to Erastus naturally, or any of those who had been mentioned; it suggests rather that he was known both to writer and readers as a brother in the Lord.

Section (7) 16. 25-27.

Doxology.

In closing his Epistle with a doxology, an outburst of praise in keeping with the sublime character of his theme, the Apostle repeats many of the expressions which he used in the Introduction, and which relate to the fundamental subjects contained in the body of the Epistle. They are as follows: —

(1) The special commission given to Paul himself to preach the Gospel (verse 25, and 1. 1, 5).

(2) The testimony of the prophets in the Scriptures (verse 26, 1. 2.).

(3) The testimony among the nations (verse 26 and 1. 5).

(4) The obedience of faith (verse 26 and 1. 5).

(5) The ascription of praise, "through Jesus Christ" (verse 27, and 1. 8).

The parallel was evidently purposive. The introduction gave intimation of the transcendent theme of which the Apostle was about to treat. His subject

having been unfolded, his task complete, he fittingly resumes the mention of his chief topics in his outburst of praise.

Verse 25, "*Now to Him that is able to stablish you.*" In 1. 11, the Apostle expressed his desire to come and impart a spiritual gift to them that they might be established. Whether his wish would be fulfilled or not, the power for the desired effect lay with God.

"*According to my Gospel.*" The spiritual confirmation of the saints is in keeping with the teaching of the Gospel, which not only proclaims remission of sins and justification through faith (3. 21—5, end), but a new life in Christ, which is maintained by the power of the indwelling Spirit (chapters 6 to 8), and effects the fulfilment of all righteousness (chapters 12-15).

"*And the preaching of Jesus Christ.*" The word *kērugma*, preaching, is here used of the contents of the message, "that which is preached." "The preaching of Jesus Christ," though grammatically it might mean "what was preached by Jesus Christ," is explanatory of the preceding phrase "my gospel," and signifies that the Person of Christ is the subject of the message proclaimed. See 1. 3; 2. 16; 10. 8-12; Gal. 1. 6-8, *e.g.*

"*According to the revelation of the mystery.*" That is, the Gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ were in accordance with the revelation of the mystery, or, rather, "a mystery"; the absence of the article indi-

cates that the mystery referred to is one among others.*

Of this mystery the Apostle had received a special dispensation or stewardship (Eph. 3. 4). Its great feature is "that the Gentiles are fellow-heirs and fellow-members of the body, and fellow-partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel" (verses 2, 6). Of this he had treated in the Epistle he was now concluding (10. 12-20, *e.g.*). In speaking, however, of the revelation of the mystery, he does not here imply that a special revelation had been given to him; he is merely stating in a general way that what had been hidden before by God had now been revealed. It was of another mystery that he wrote in 11. 25.

"*Which hath been kept in silence through times eternal.*" There had been no Divine pronouncement on the subject. God's providential dealings with man are varied though continuous. His plans have unfolded gradually, each detail having its own Divinely predetermined time for its disclosure, each being given not only as a self-revelation of His nature, His attributes and counsels, but also appropriately to the conditions and needs of the particular period alloted to it.

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* See "The Twelve Mysteries of Scripture," by the writer, in the E.C. Library. Pickering and Inglis.

Aionios, "eternal," is an adjective derived from *aion,* an age, a period of undefined duration. Accordingly, the adjective "describes duration, either undefined but not endless," as here and in 2 Tim. 1. 9; Tit. 1. 2, or "undefined because endless," as in the next verse, "the eternal God," and in all the other places where the word occurs in the New Testament.* The "times eternal" are therefore those periods or ages preceding the revelation of the Gospel and undefined and unlimited both in their number and extent.

"*But now is manifested.*" This shows that a mystery in Scripture is not something mysterious. In common use the word "mystery" implies the withholding of knowledge, whereas the chief idea in the Scriptural use of the terms is the disclosing of truth. A Scripture mystery, then, is that which, being beyond the range of unassisted natural apprehension, requires Divine revelation in order for it to be understood by man, and, further, consists of that which God has determined to reveal by His Spirit in His appointed time to those who are fit to receive it. Hence the terms used in connection with the subject are "manifested" (Col. 1. 26, and here *e.g.*), "made known" (see below), "revealed" (Eph. 3. 5), "understand,"

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* See Notes on Thessalonians, by Hogg and Vine, pp. 232-233.

"knowledge" (Eph. 4. 4), "make to see" (verse 9), "full assurance of understanding" (Col. 2. 2).

"*And by the Scriptures of the prophets.*" This is an interpretation rather than a translation. The words are literally "by prophetic writings." The Apostle is referring to the means by which the manifestation of the mystery was being given, and for this purpose his own inspired writings were being used. He is pointing therefore not to Old Testament Scriptures, for this revelation had not been given through them, but to those parts of the New Testament which had already been, and were in process of being, written. This Epistle which he had now completed formed part of those prophetic writings. It is true that the Old Testament Scriptures were prophetic writings, and that the Apostles made use of them in unfolding the truth of the mystery, but that in itself would not adequately interpret his words here.

"*According to the commandment of the eternal God.*" The Apostle frequently refers to the special commission given to him to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles. See 1. 1, 5, 14; 1 Tim. 1. 1, 11; Gal. 1. 12; 2. 7; Titus 1. 3; Eph. 3. 8. He speaks here of "the eternal God," appropriately to what he has just been saying concerning the mystery. Its truth lay hidden in the mind of that Being whose counsels, like Himself, were from eternity.

"*Is made known unto all the nations, unto obedience of faith,*" *i.e.*, faith which is characterised by

obedience, for faith is an act of submission to God, a fulfilment of His command (John 6. 29, and 1 John 3. 23). In chapter 1. 5, the obedience of faith was stated to be the purpose of the grace and Apostleship which Paul had received. Here it is associated with the preaching of the Gospel itself.

"*To the only wise God,*" or, rather, "to God only wise." These last two words bear emphasis, and the description is appropriate to all that the Apostle has now stated about the Divine purpose both in keeping secret and in revealing the mystery, and in the power of God to establish the saints. The title is also an appropriate close to the whole Epistle.

"*Through Jesus Christ.*" All that is ascribed to God by the redeemed is so ascribed and rises to Him through Christ Jesus. Cf. 1. 8; 1 Pet. 4. 11.

"*To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.*" This ascription of praise is undoubtedly to God the Father, but the Apostle has framed the order of His words that Christ may likewise, at least by implication, be the subject of the praise and adoration by which the being, character, and attributes of God are recognised by His people.

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